

East Herts Council
Via email to: planning@eastherts.gov.uk



Registered Offices:
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To whom it may concern

Land off Eastwick Hall Lane, Eastwick, Herts, CM20 2QP

On behalf of our client, Mr K Ashman, we are instructed to submit an application for Permission in Principle for up to one dwelling on the above site.

In support of this submission, we attach the following supporting information (in addition to this letter):

- Duly completed Permission in Principle Form
- Site Location Plan
- 00_002_ pro ground floor plan
- 00_003_ pro first floor roof plan
- 00_005_ pro layout plan
- 00_101_ pro front rear elevation
- 00_102_ pro side elevations
- Illustrative images showing design ethos

We also agree to pay the statutory application fee via telephone payment once details and reference for payment has been received.

Site Location & Description

The site is currently a disused storage area but it is understood that it was once rear garden amenity space. It has its own access from Eastwick Hall Lane, to the south of the village of Eastwick and directly behind existing residential properties. It is long term vacant, having previously been used as storage evident through a selection of storage containers on the site, some areas of hard standing and a dilapidated garage.

The Proposed Development

This application seeks permission in principle to develop the application site for a single residential unit as a 3-bed family home. Whilst the detailed design at this stage is just indicative, given that this is an application for permission in principle, the design ethos is that the property would be an L-Shape. This would be tucked into the Corner of the site so that the narrower wing would respect the building line of adjacent dwellings and then the deeper wing would be parallel to the site boundary on the eastern boundary. Parking and amenity space would be to the front (south) of the property so as to maximise the stunning views from the site and there could also be an integral garage that would provide parking for one car (although the internal driveway could be considerable in length therefore be able to provide ample additional parking to meet policy requirements).

The proposed dwelling would be accessed from a new internal access road via Eastwick Hall Lane, utilising the existing dropped kerb access point that already exists in this location, which previously provided access to the site for storage and the existing garage located on the site.

The proposed location of the dwelling has been designed to respect neighbouring properties in terms of character and design and has been sited to minimise any potential for overlooking or loss of privacy for both existing and future occupiers.

Planning Justification

The site is not located within any policy designations that may constrain or prevent the site from being developed. It is considered that this site could provide an excellent opportunity to be developed as a natural infill site for private family residential accommodation to meet local need.

The scheme would also make efficient use of land whilst providing a well-designed residential development in line with Policy HOU2 (Housing Density). Policy HOU2 allows for higher density development in or near town centres if in line with character of the area.

Policy HOU12 (Change of Use of Land to Residential Garden and Enclosure of Amenity Land) allows for the change of use of land to residential if certain criteria are met. The proposal would meet these criteria as follows:

The change would not result in an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and landscape in that the development is sympathetic to existing development and their relationship to the wider character area.

The area is mainly residential and thus the change of use would be in line with the character of the area. The proposal would provide adequate outdoor space in character with the area and appropriate to the size of the proposed unit.

Landscaping and boundary treatment would seek to be a benefit to the visual appearance of the area.

Notwithstanding, the site lies within the settlement boundary and would therefore fall under Policy VILL3 (Group 3 Villages) which would allow limited infilling "identified in an adopted Neighbourhood Plan".

The site is within the Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Area. The site is not identified as a location for growth within the Neighbourhood Plan, but development in existing villages is not prohibited within this plan.

Whilst it is recognised that a wide community boundary has been drawn around Eastwick to prevent the merging of existing and new villages through development, the nearest village is planned to the west of Eastwick so infill development of this site is unlikely to create a merging of existing and planned settlements. It is therefore considered that the scheme would be commensurate with surrounding development proposals and would not create visual impact.

Sustainability

It is considered that this site is entirely appropriate for a housing site as it is within easy walking and cycling distance to key services including a village pub and a bus stop that are already located within the village of Eastwick and within close proximity to the wider array of shops and services within the nearby town centre of Harlow.

We consider that the above clearly demonstrates that the site is accessible. This level of accessibility has been considered entirely appropriate in similar locations within several recent appeal decisions.

The Inspector for Appeal Ref: APP/C1950/W/20/3260692 (Land opposite No 9 Rollswood Road, Welwyn, Hertfordshire, AL6 9TX) assesses the sustainability of the location of the proposed development as satisfactory, stating,

"...whilst Welwyn & Codicote, approximately 1.2 miles away, could also be reached by walking using the interconnecting footway on the B656 at the bottom of Rollswood Road. I recognise that this distance may prove difficult for some, but it is of a broadly level gradient and I am satisfied that it is not so far that it would prove overly onerous for future occupants to walk. The appellant's evidence also reveals that the bus stops at the bottom of Rollswood Road provide services to a variety of larger settlements, some of which contain train stations. Overall, I found the location and accessibility of the appeal site to services and facilities by transport nodes other than the car to be of a generally acceptable standard."

In another, the Inspector for the allowed appeal for the erection of two dwellings in a small village (Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/W/19/3222257, Chipping House, Chipping, Buntingford, Herts SG9 0PG) determines the sustainability thus:

"The settlement does not contain a shop or other services apart from a public house. However, there is a good bus service to Buntingford where there are shops, services, schools and health facilities. Whilst it is likely that the occupiers of the proposed dwellings would use cars for some trips, other more sustainable modes could easily be used, such as the bus or cycling. The site is located a short distance from the bus stop.

The location is therefore sustainable for the scale of housing development proposed..."

Conclusion

Notwithstanding the above, NPPF Paragraph 11 states that Councils should “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.”

We are aware as this is a stage 1 application for Permission in Principle, that this application is not supported by any technical material, as these are identified within this stage 1 process and addressed under the Stage 2 Technical Details Consent stage.

In the determination this application for Permission in Principle, you will no doubt have regard to the requirements of Paragraph 38 of the NPPF which requires you to approach decisions in a positive way, and for decision-takers at every level to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

We trust the Council has sufficient material to be able to consider this proposal. However, if any additional material or clarification is required, please contact the undersigned. We look forward to meeting with the Council to discuss the scheme.

Yours Faithfully



Karen Crowder-James

Director

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