

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Alex Howard.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/02950/FP	Erection of detached self-build bungalow with integral garage, to include associated parking and boundary fencing following demolition of existing storage buildings and garage (as amended by plans received 4th February 2026)	Land To The Front Of Everglades Maiden Street Weston Hertfordshire SG4 7AA

Submitted Plan Nos

JC 25-01 Rev 3 JC 25-02 Rev 4 JC 25-03 Rev 3 JC 25-04 Rev 3 JC 25-05 Rev 2 JC 25-05 Rev 2A JC 25-06 Rev 0

SP2	Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distrib
SP9	Design and Sustainability
D1	Sustainable design
D3	Protecting living conditions
T2	Parking
NE4	Biodiversity and geological sites
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 None.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Site Notice and Neighbour Representations** – Comments received from Homefield House, Kwetu, Kyrenia and Amberley, 3 objections and 1 supporter, raising the following matters (summary):

- ☐ Concern about the roof form and ridge height, requests for a fully hipped roof to reduce visual bulk and avoid gable-end dominance. Further concern that current height/design makes future loft conversion or second-storey extension too easy, causing overlooking and overdevelopment.
- ☐ Request for a restrictive covenant or planning condition preventing upward extension.
- ☐ Proposed building considered overbearing, especially for Homefield House. The plot will appear cramped, particularly in relation to Everglades and the street scene.

- ☐ Concern that the bungalow reads as an annex to Everglades due to proximity.
- ☐ Direct facing towards Kyrenia and proximity to neighbouring driveways seen as reducing privacy.
- ☐ Entry/exit privacy for multiple properties considered affected.
- ☐ The development does not reflect the established spatial character of Maiden Street. Concern about setting a precedent for further infill.
- ☐ Concern that foundations may damage root systems of mature trees near the boundary with Homefield House.
- ☐ Reduction of Everglades' usable parking considered problematic for a large house.
- ☐ Garage size criticised as too small for modern vehicles or disabled access.
- ☐ Concern over future maintenance liabilities for the shared private driveway; suggestion for legal conditions to retain or formalise ownership.
- ☐ Concern that application overstates available natural screening, given that existing trees belong to neighbours and provide limited or seasonal cover. Landscape mitigation considered inadequate.
- ☐ Request for the application to be determined by Planning Committee, not under delegated powers..
- ☐ Recognition of a need for accessible, single-storey accommodation for older residents in the village.
- ☐ Supporter sees the proposal as a beneficial addition to Weston's housing mix.
- ☐ No concerns expressed regarding privacy or visual impact from Kyrenia.

3.2 **Hertfordshire Highways** – General guidance given but no formal comments given that the site is accessed via a private road.

3.3 **Environmental Health** – No objection subject to precautionary contamination condition.

3.4 **North Herts Ecology** – No objection subject to Ecological Enhancement Plan condition. BNG exempt as self-build proposal.

3.5 **Waste and Recycling** – None received.

3.6 **Weston Parish Council** – *“The applicant attended a Parish Council meeting on the 11/12/25 and agreed that they would be willing to accept a modification to the plans that would include a hip or significant half-hip end to the roof to reduce the building's impact on a neighbouring property and covenant on the building to prevent it from ever having a second storey adding. On that basis the Council agreed that they had no objection”.*

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The site is an area of land currently associated with Everglades, a large, detached property located on the north-west side of Maiden Street, Weston. The property is accessed via a private road from Maiden Street and the site pursuant to this application comprises the front garden and an existing outbuilding. The site is immediately adjacent to Homefield House to the south-east, Kwetu to the south, Ridgewood to the south-west and the host dwelling Everglades to the north-west, as well as other neighbours within close proximity including Amberley, Kyrenia, and Tinkers Hill.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Planning permission is sought for the erection of one detached self-build bungalow with integral garage, to include associated parking and boundary fencing following demolition of existing storage buildings and garage (as amended by plans received 4th February 2026)
- 4.2.2 The proposal would seek to subdivide the existing plot for Everglades by sectioning off the front garden area and demolishing an existing outbuilding to facilitate the erection of a single-storey bungalow, with 2 private parking spaces, front and rear amenity space, and a cycle storage/waste storage building.

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 The key issues in this case are:

- ☐ The Principle of Development
- ☐ Design and Impact on the Character of the Area
- ☐ Impact on Neighbouring Properties/Future Occupiers
- ☐ Parking
- ☐ BNG/Ecology
- ☐ Sustainability
- ☐ Other Matters

Principle of Development

- 4.3.2 The site is within the settlement boundary of Weston, a Category A village. Policy SP2 of the Local Plan states that general development will be allowed within the defined settlement boundaries of Category A villages. The proposal is therefore in accordance with this policy and is acceptable in principle.
- 4.3.3 The proposal is for one self-build dwelling. Paragraph 73 of the NPPF states that small sites can make an important contribution to meeting housing requirements, which includes supporting self and custom build housing. The Council is underproviding Self/Custom build dwellings which weighs in favour of this proposal.
- 4.3.4 At the time of writing, the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply with the figure sitting between 2.6 and 3.3 years. In this respect, the matters set out under Paragraph 11d of the NPPF become relevant. This states that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, permission be granted unless; i: the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong 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.

Design and Impact on the Character of the Area

- 4.3.5 Policy D1 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted provided that development responds positively to the site's local context in addition to other criteria. Policy SP9 of the Local Plan further considers that new development will be supported

where it is well designed and located and responds positively to its local context. These considerations are echoed in Section 12 of the NPPF.

- 4.3.6 The proposed dwelling would be positioned in the front garden of the host dwelling, following the demolition of the existing outbuilding and the associated subdivision of the plot to demark a new boundary line for the host and proposed dwelling. The dwelling itself, which has been the subject of amendments between officers and the applicant, would see a single storey bungalow taking up most of the plot, measuring approx. 12.0m wide and 11.5m deep, with a full-hipped roof measuring approx. 2.7m to eaves and 4.0m to ridge. The bungalow would be finished in red brick, plain tiles and uPVC windows. The dwelling would benefit from private amenity space to the rear, at a maximum depth of 6.2m and a front driveway for 2 vehicles.
- 4.3.7 In terms of local context, this private road off Maiden Street leads to a number of existing residential properties namely Everglades, Amberley, and Kyrenia, which have a rather tight, close knit relationship with one another. Everglades is a sizable property occupying a spacious plot, where as Amberley is smaller in terms of scale/plot size, and Kyrenia is much smaller and is a more recent addition, refused under application ref: 20/00790/FP but allowed on appeal. This proposal appears to be trying to mimic the general scale and siting of the bungalow at Kyrenia, which can be understood to an extent. However, the plot at Kyrenia appears to be larger than this plot, as evidenced by the location plan which shows a fair amount of space on all sides of the bungalow that exists on site.
- 4.3.8 With this in mind, officers are concerned with the proposed layout and design of this bungalow. The site, which is the front garden of Everglades, is small and the siting of a detached bungalow on this site, leaving very little private amenity space and being very close to each neighbouring boundary, including the proposed new shared boundary with the host dwelling, would appear contrived and out of context with the existing character of development. Whilst the existence of the development opposite the site is acknowledged, officers do not consider that the bungalow erected opposite this site at Kyrenia sets any kind of precedent, as that site occupies a larger plot, is further away from shared boundaries, and does not appear to be overly contrived when compared to the proposal pursuant to this application.
- 4.3.9 Further to the above, the siting of the proposed dwelling in the front garden of the host dwelling, Everglades, would result in a strange relationship given the new shared boundary with the new dwelling being sited almost directly in front of the host dwelling. This is of course due to the need to provide private amenity space for the proposed dwelling and clearly demark the two plots, but the outcome is an unfavourable one in design/layout terms and speaks to the unsuitable design and siting of this proposal in context.
- 4.3.10 The external appearance of the dwelling itself, which would appear to be a modest bungalow with reasonable form and materially, is considered acceptable and would not result in harm to the character of the area.
- 4.3.11 Overall, it is considered that the development would not respond well to the sites local context, given the above concerns relating to the layout and siting of the scheme which would be overly contrived, out of context with the prevailing character of the area, and result in an unfavourable relationship between the host and proposed dwelling. This would be contrary to Policy SP9 and D1 of the Local Plan.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties/Future Occupiers

- 4.3.12 Policy D3 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions.
- 4.3.13 The site benefits from a number of neighbours including Homefield House to the south-east, Kwetu to the south, Ridgewood to the south-west and the host dwelling Everglades to the north-west, as well as other neighbours within close proximity including Amberley, Kyrenia, and Tinkers Hill.
- 4.3.14 The proposed bungalow has been positioned approx, 1.1m from the shared boundary of Homefield House, between 4.0m – 6.2m from the shared boundary with Kwetu, and 1.0m from the proposed new shared boundary with Everglades. The original proposal submitted under this application sought to erect a gable ended, dual-pitched roof bungalow with a ridge height of approx. 5.4m. The applicant submitted amended plans, following the Parish Council meeting and receipt of comments from the neighbouring properties, with a half-hipped scheme which retained the ridge height at 5.4m. Whilst officers did acknowledge that the applicant had gone some way to try and mitigate the impact of this proposal on the immediate neighbour's due east at Homefield House, officers were not convinced that the proposal has been amended sufficiently to mitigate harm to neighbouring amenity. The proposed bungalow would be approx. 12.0m from the rear elevation of Homefield House and the ridge and eaves would be approx. 5.4m and 3.7m in height, which would be adversely overbearing even with the half-hips included in the amended plans, to the detriment of their residential amenity and contrary to Policy D3 of the Local Plan.
- 4.3.15 The applicant has taken it upon himself to amend the scheme further for review and consideration, with the current proposal which comprises a fully hipped roof and reduced ridge height compared to the previous schemes. The proposal would now have a ridge and eaves height of approx. 4.0m and 2.7m respectively, which is a considerable concession in scale. There is an existing outbuilding on the site, close to the shared boundaries, at approx. 3.0m in height, so this scheme would be a marginal increase in height and would bring development further forward in comparison. With this in mind, the previous concerns raised by officer relating to the impact of the proposal on the amenity of Homefield House has been satisfactorily addressed by the amended plans. The bungalow would be visible from this immediate neighbour above the 2.3m existing fence at the neighbours rear, but given the eaves are 2.7m and the full hipped roof would set development sloping away from this boundary, the scheme would not be overbearing as it was previously considered to be. Moreover, there are no overlooking/loss of privacy concerns associated with this proposal, given its single-storey nature and siting, and the bungalow is unlikely to result in any material loss of daylight/sunlight for this reason also.
- 4.3.16 Therefore, the proposal would not result in any material harm to the amenities of neighbours, in line with Policy D3 of the Local Plan.
- 4.3.17 For the proposed future occupiers, the dwelling would measure approx. 100sqm internally which would exceed the nationally prescribed minimum space standards for its no. of bedrooms/persons, and all habitable rooms would benefit from acceptable levels of natural light. The proposed size of private amenity space is considered to be on the smaller side, and these concerns have already been made in earlier parts of this report,

as it speaks to the overall contrived layout which officers consider inappropriate in this context. Overall, the proposal would not result in unacceptable harm to the reasonable living conditions of future occupiers

Highways, Access and Parking

- 4.3.18 The proposal would seek to use the existing private road from Maiden Street, leading to the proposed and host dwelling. The Highway Authority have not provided any substantiated comments in this instance as they do not maintain this road, but they have provided some general comments to assist officers. In this instance, given the scale of development and the other properties that are reasonably served by this road, there are no highway and access objections.
- 4.3.19 The proposed development seeks to provide 2 parking spaces for the new bungalow. This is in accordance with the requirements of the Vehicle Parking at New Developments SPD and Policy T2 of the Emerging Local Plan.

BNG/Ecology

- 4.3.20 The Council's Ecologist has confirmed that the application is exempt from the mandatory 10% BNG given that it is a self-build plot. To ensure measurable gains in biodiversity, an EEP is recommended which is considered reasonable in this case.
- 4.3.21 There are trees located in the front portion of the site that are to be retained, and there are other trees within neighbouring gardens which are close to the shared boundary (Homefield House, Kwetu and Ridgewood). The application states that no works or removal of trees are required to facilitate the proposal and in the event this application was to be recommended favourably, a suitable condition for landscaping and protecting root protection zones could have been enforced to ensure no harm comes to the trees on site. This would accord with Policy NE4 of the Local Plan.

Sustainability

- 4.3.22 The three overarching objectives of economic, social, and environmental sustainability are considerations that should be weighed up in the planning balance.
- 4.3.23 With respect to economic sustainability, the erection of 1 self-build bungalow would bring modest benefits throughout the construction phase, which would likely utilise local tradesmen. Other economic benefits are the use of more local services in Weston as well as slightly more distant services in Letchworth and Baldock. These benefits are considered to be modest and attribute modest weight.
- 4.3.24 Social sustainability would be impacted through the delivery of 1 dwelling against the Council's five-year land supply position, including the delivery of a self-build scheme. The contribution that small sites can make to an areas housing figures is important, and this should be given modest weight.
- 4.3.25 Lastly, environmental sustainability would be impacted by the inclusion of an air source heat pump and the Ecological Enhancement Plan which would be conditioned to ensure measurable gains in biodiversity. Given the scale of development and the environmental benefits, this should be afforded modest weight.

Other Matters

4.3.26 It is considered that the majority of comments raised by interested parties have been directly addressed in the body of the report. However, to ensure all points are considered, each matter will be addressed in turn below:

- ☐ *Concern about the roof form and ridge height, requests for a fully hipped roof to reduce visual bulk and avoid gable-end dominance. Further concern that current height/design makes future loft conversion or second-storey extension too easy, causing overlooking and overdevelopment.* This has been addressed in the report and through the submission of amended plans.
- ☐ *Request for a restrictive covenant or planning condition preventing upward extension.* The scheme has been amended in a way that would restrict further upwards development, but the Council could have sought to remove Permitted Development Rights under Class AA and B to ensure this is the case.
- ☐ *Proposed building considered overbearing, especially for Homefield House. The plot will appear cramped, particularly in relation to Everglades and the street scene.* This has been addressed in the report.
- ☐ *Concern that the bungalow reads as an annex to Everglades due to proximity.* This is noted and agreed.
- ☐ *Direct facing towards Kyrenia and proximity to neighbouring driveways seen as reducing privacy.* This has been addressed in the report, given the distances involved there is no adverse loss of privacy.
- ☐ *Entry/exit privacy for multiple properties considered affected.* This has been addressed in the report.
- ☐ *The development does not reflect the established spatial character of Maiden Street. Concern about setting a precedent for further infill.* This has been addressed in the report.
- ☐ *Concern that foundations may damage root systems of mature trees near the boundary with Homefield House.* This has been addressed in the report.
- ☐ *Reduction of Everglades' usable parking considered problematic for a large house.* Everglades would retain sufficient space for parking that meets our Parking Standards.
- ☐ *Garage size criticised as too small for modern vehicles or disabled access.* The garage is considered to be an acceptable size.
- ☐ *Concern over future maintenance liabilities for the shared private driveway; suggestion for legal conditions to retain or formalise ownership.* This is outside of Planning Control.
- ☐ *Concern that application overstates available natural screening, given that existing trees belong to neighbours and provide limited or seasonal cover. Landscape mitigation considered inadequate.* This has been addressed in the report.
- ☐ *Request for the application to be determined by Planning Committee, not under delegated powers.* The application is not required to go to Planning Committee by default and it has not been called in by a Local Ward Councillor.
- ☐ *Recognition of a need for accessible, single-storey accommodation for older residents in the village.*
- ☐ *Supporter sees the proposal as a beneficial addition to Weston's housing mix.*
- ☐ *No concerns expressed regarding privacy or visual impact from Kyrenia.*

4.4 **Conclusion**

Planning Balance

- 4.4.1 At the time of writing the Council's five-year land supply is between 2.6 and 3.3 years, which is a significant shortfall. Therefore, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged in accordance with paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF, where permission should be granted unless; i: the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong 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.

The site is within the settlement boundary of Weston, a Category A village under Policy SP2 of the Local Plan. The provision of one self-build bungalow would be acceptable in principle and would deliver a self-build dwelling in an LPA that is currently underproviding these types of homes. There are no areas or assets of particular importance that provides a strong reason for refusing this development under Footnote 7. The proposal would deliver one dwelling, which is a modest benefit to the Council's five-year land supply, and would have modest economic, social and environmental benefits.

However, Officers are concerned that the site, which is the front garden of Everglades, is small and the siting of a detached bungalow on this site, leaving very little private amenity space and being very close to each neighbouring boundary, including the proposed new shared boundary with the host dwelling which would lead to an unfavourable relationship between the host and proposed dwellings, would appear contrived and out of context with the existing character of development. The proposal does not respond well to the site's local context, which is deemed contrary to Policy SP9 and D1 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF, and this poor design and layout is considered to warrant substantial weight.

Therefore, mindful of the tilted balance as per paragraph 11d of the NPPF, it is considered that the adverse impacts of the proposed design and layout as outlined in this report, would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the very modest benefits associated with this proposal. The application is therefore considered unacceptable and is recommended for refusal on this basis.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 N/A

4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 N/A

5.0 **Recommendation**

- 5.1 That planning permission be **REFUSED** for the following reason:

1. The site, which is the front garden of Everglades, is small and the siting of a detached bungalow on this site, leaving very little private amenity space and being very close to each neighbouring boundary, including the proposed new shared boundary with the host dwelling which would lead to an unfavourable relationship between the host and proposed dwellings, would appear contrived and out of context with the existing character of development in the area. This is deemed contrary to Policy SP9 and D1 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been refused for this proposal for the clear reasons set out in this decision notice. The Council acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant in an attempt to narrow down the reasons for refusal but fundamental objections could not be overcome. The Council has therefore acted proactively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Signed  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 12 March 2026	