

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Henry Thomas.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/02752/FP	Erection of one self-build detached 3- bed bungalow with associated parking and landscaping	10 St Katherines Close Ickleford Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 3XS

Submitted Plan Nos

24072-01 24072-02 1234-03 24072-07 24072-04 24072-05 3D 24072-06 3D

D1	Sustainable design
D2	House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild
D3	Protecting living conditions
SP1	Sustainable development in North Herts
SP9	Design and Sustainability
T2	Parking
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 None.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Site Notice and Neighbour Notification** – 2 received in objection. Their comments are summarised as:

- ☐ Plot is too small
- ☐ Harm to on-street parking
- ☐ Increased noise to neighbours
- ☐ Loss of privacy

3.2 **Ickleford Parish Council** – None received.

3.3 **Environmental Health (Noise, Air and Contaminated Land)** – No objection subject to conditions.

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

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 No. 10 is an end terrace two storey property located on the north side of St. Katherines Close in a residential part of Ickleford. The dwelling is part of a row of brick built, with tiled gable roof and white uPVC windows. The dwelling is served by a driveway / parking area to the side of the dwelling.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 The proposal seeks to create a detached three bedroom bungalow dwelling within the rear garden of No. 10. The new property would be a single storey with a hipped roof. At its closest point, the dwelling would be approximately 1.12m from the boundary with No. 8, 1.19m from the boundary with No. 12, 5.4m from the rear boundary fence and 14.5m from the host dwelling.

4.2.2 The proposed dwelling would be 8.479m wide and 14.174m deep. The roof would peak at 5.284m with eaves at 2.76m. The proposed floorspace would be approximately, the plot would be served by approximately 106sqm. The proposed materials seek to match the host dwelling.

4.3 **Key Issues**

Principle of the proposed development

4.3.1 The site is located within the Settlement of Ickleford where Local Plan Policy SP2 supports the development of housing within the settlement boundary. Development of the site for housing would therefore be supported in principle under Policy SP2.

Benefits of the Development

4.3.2 The overarching purpose of the planning system is to contribute to achieving sustainable development, as stated in Section 2 of the NPPF. This is considered against the three objectives of sustainable development, the economic, social and environmental objectives.

4.3.3 Firstly, in terms of the economic objective, the proposed development would see the delivery of jobs during the build/construction phase which is a benefit. Secondly, in terms of the social objective, this proposal would add an additional dwelling to the District's housing supply which could be delivered in a relatively short space of time. Lastly, in terms of the environmental objective, the proposal would incorporate some sustainable building features, such as an EV charging point and new landscaping where appropriate.

4.3.4 Overall, on the grounds of sustainability, the economic and social benefits of the proposal are very modest in my opinion, which is relative to the scale of development of

a single dwelling. Moreover, there would be some environmental benefits through the incorporation of sustainable building features. Overall, moderate weight is attributed to these benefits.

Impact on the Character of the Area

- 4.3.5 Policy D1 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that respond positively to the sites local context and create or enhance the public realm. 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. This is echoed in Section 12 of the NPPF.
- 4.3.6 St Katherines Close has a relatively consistent building line with dwellings sited close to the highway with small front gardens providing off-street parking. These dwellings are predominantly sets of 4 terraced two storey dwellings, however No 2 to no.8 are semi-detached bungalow dwellings, with No. 2 and 4 being set back behind this building line with a large area of public amenity land to the front. With the exception of these two dwellings being an anomaly, the rest of the properties benefit from long and narrow rear gardens. As such, I consider that development within the garden of No.10 would be classed as 'back land' development which would be contrary to the prevailing character. Back-land development such as that proposed, would result in material harm to the character and appearance of the area, eroding the spacious quality that currently exists.
- 4.3.7 In their cover letter the applicant has suggested that the approved bungalow to the rear of No.19 sets a precedent for 'back land' development under application ref: 21/00457/FP. However, No.19 is a corner plot, the approved bungalow has been oriented to front onto St. Katherines Close and therefore continues the linear street scene building line with dwellings on both sides of the street. Therefore, in my view, I do not give any weight to this decision.

Design and Appearance

- 4.3.8 In my view, the proposed design of the bungalow would contribute further to its departing with the prevailing character of the area. The proposed bungalow would extend almost the full width of the plot with a significant depth, as a result the dwelling would have a sprawling footprint which would be disproportionately larger than the ground floor footprints of the neighbouring dwellings. Although this would exceed the nationally prescribed space standards for a 3bed/6 person dwelling, the dominance of the bungalow within its plot would leave insufficient private amenity garden space for the host dwelling and the proposed dwelling. I therefore consider that the scale of the bungalow would result in a contrived form of development which would fail to respond positively to the site's local context and as such would be conflict with Policies SP9 and D1 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

The impact of the development on living conditions

4.3.10 The proposed dwelling is sited in the rear garden of the host dwelling which is bounded on either side with two other dwellings with similar sized plots. The proposed dwelling is a bungalow with no side facing windows above ground level. Although the bungalow would have modest eaves height, the dwelling would have minimal offsetting from the boundary and therefore the ridge at 5.284m would be highly visible to the neighbouring dwellings. It is my view, that the proposed dwelling would constitute an overbearing form of development that would result in a material detrimental impact upon the reasonable living conditions and well-being of neighbours. The proposal is therefore considered contrary to Policy D3 of the Local Plan.

4.3.11 The Environmental Health officer has not raised any objection in terms of noise ingress and egress.

Highway and parking matters

4.3.12 The proposed dwelling would share the existing access from 10 St. Katherine's Close. The proposed scheme could provide vehicle parking spaces for 2 dwellings and therefore satisfies the requirement set out under Policy T2. Whilst a dwelling would contribute to an increase in local traffic, given that the proposal is for one dwelling, this increase is considered to be minor.

Environmental matters

4.3.13 The site is within Flood Zone 1 of the Environment Agency's Flood Map and therefore has a low risk of flooding. The site is not known to have any historic contamination and is currently garden land. The Council's Environmental Health officers raise no objections in terms of contamination or air quality issues.

4.4 Conclusion

4.4.1 Overall, it is acknowledged that the proposed dwelling is located within the settlement of Ickleford, which is sustainable in accordance with Policy SP2 of the Local Plan. It is further considered that the proposed development would see some modest benefits.

4.4.2 The Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites and therefore there is a potential presumption in favour of development as set out in Paragraph 11 of the NPPF. However, the benefit of one additional dwelling to help address the current shortfall of housing in the district is of limited value. The adverse impact of the proposed development in terms of the harm to the spatial character of the area and the poor living conditions that would be experienced by existing occupiers would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal when assessed against the policies in the NPPF as a whole. The proposal would not respond positively to the site's local context. The proposed development would be contrary to Policy SP9 and D1 of the Local Plan, as well as Section 12 of the NPPF.

4.4.3 Weighing up the aforementioned matters in the planning balance, it is considered that the relatively modest benefits associated by this proposal, namely the net gain of 1

dwelling towards housing supply, the economic/social/environmental benefits, the acceptable design, parking and landscaping, do not outweigh the material harm on the amenity of the neighbours and to the character and appearance of the area, by virtue of the back-land nature of this proposal that does not respond well to the sites local context and would be contrary to the transferable considerations from the neighbouring appeal decision. It is therefore considered that planning permission should be refused.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

4.5.1 None applicable

5.0 **Recommendation**

5.1 That planning permission be **REFUSED** for the following reasons:

1. The proposed dwelling, by reason of its location and restricted plot size , would result in unacceptable back land development that is contrary and harmful to the distinctive spatial character of the area. As a result the development is contrary to the provisions of Policies SP9 and D1 of the Submission Local Plan 2011 - 2031 as it would not be sympathetic to the surrounding built environment and fails to improve the character and quality of the area and the way it functions.
2. The proposed development, by reason of the restricted plot size, the height and scale of the proposed dwelling and its close proximity to neighbouring properties , would give rise to an overbearing impact on and general loss of amenity to neighbouring occupiers to the detriment of their living conditions. The proposal would fail to provide and maintain an adequately high standard of environment resulting in an overdevelopment of the site contrary to the provisions of Policy D3 of the Submission Plan 2011 - 2031.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been refused for this proposal for the clear reasons set out in this decision notice. The Council has not acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant as in the Council's view the proposal is unacceptable in principle and the fundamental objections cannot be overcome through dialogue. Since no solutions can be found the Council has complied 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: 25 February 2025	