

Pirton Parish Council

Parish Clerk:
Dr Janine Budd
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Mr Thomas Howe,  
Planning Officer,  
NHDC,  
Gernon Road  
Letchworth Garden City  
11 June 2026

Dear Mr Howe

**RE: 25/02873/FP Land on the West Side of Burge End Lane**

Thank you for consulting the Pirton Parish Council.

We OBJECT to this application.

1. The house overwhelms the plot. The pitched roof and chimney stack add to the sense of the site being overwhelmed. After removing well-established trees and shrubs, and allowing for driveway and parking, there is very little room for greening the site, in total contrast to the whole of Burge End Lane. The Design and Access statement plans show all of the front area covered in hardstanding and turning space for two cars, which we understand do not, in any event, meet HCC Highways parking standards; the rear "garden area" does not appear to meet statutory minimum standards (we cannot measure exactly), and in any event is mostly taken up with patio. This is contrary to Pirton Neighbourhood Plan policies PNP2.1, and 2.9 and Local Development Plan Strategic Policy SP9.
2. This is a jarring modern design in an important part of the Conservation Area *i.e.* Character Area 2. Looking at the Planning Statement it is clear that the Conservation Officers were less than impressed with previous applications on the grounds that the proposed dwellings would, at best, be neutral, and involved, at that stage, two gardens of the terraced properties 2-12 which are non-designated heritage assets. The Senior Officer went as far as to say with that application that;

**"If formally submitted I may well conclude that the dwellings would have an undesirable and erosive impact upon the character and appearance of the Pirton Conservation Area, thereby failing to satisfy the provisions of Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990, Sections 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031."**

We agree, with this one dwelling under consideration.

Burge End, of course, leads to important listed buildings. We note that the Planning Statement overlooks Hammonds Farm (Grade ii\*) and Burge End Farm. Ashborn is also a listed building, as are the barns at Hammonds Farm. The Design and Access Statement sheds no further light on the impacts on the Conservation Area.

The Pirton Conservation Plan states on Page 58;

**"North Herts Council must not allow for the quality of design to be 'averaged down' by the neutral and negative elements of the built environment. Officers must where possible seek schemes which enhance the built environment and look to conserve and reinstate**

**historic features. It is also considered that poor-quality or unsympathetic schemes should not be allowed, both within the Conservation Area and its setting.**

**Care should be taken to ensure that unsympathetic additions do not have an impact on views along historic streets and the character of groups of historic buildings is preserved. "**

Permitting this development would also set an unfortunate precedent for other gardens in Burge End and Shillington Road, both of which are characterised by designated and non-designated historic buildings, with (mostly) large, green garden spaces. This design is the total opposite.

Thus this development would be contrary to Pirton Neighbourhood Plan policy PNP2.1.

3. Highways and Parking.

Highways object and rightly so, the slope is steep - too steep for parking and the parking spaces are not up to standard. We have read the comments of resident Roy Blythe who sets out the issues cogently, including that deliveries will block the road and construction vehicles will find it very difficult indeed to enter and exit the site safely. We are also concerned that the necessary visual splay may impinge on land owned by other people, and NHDC should check the issue.

There is no room in Burge End Lane for off-street parking. Parking in the surrounding roads – Shillington Road, West Lane and High Street, is at a premium, where the roads are wide enough to take a parked vehicle on one side. The proposal in this regard is contrary to Local Development Plan Policy T2.

4. Biodiversity

This is a plot that has been left to go wild, only since being in the current owners' possession (please see comments of resident Nick Parkin). Nonetheless, as garden or "wild" area, there is wildlife aplenty, especially if you stop focussing only on protected species. We are concerned that any biodiversity net gain will take place off-site. The "enhancements" set out in the ecology report are no such thing; not only is there scarce room for them, they would not replace that which would be lost by the wholesale clearance of the site. We doubt very much that no trees will be removed, given the tight space in which building works will take place.

5. Archaeology.

We have read the observations of HCC Environment (Archaeology) and, should this application be granted, concur with Andy Instone's recommendations. We have also read the comments of Dr Gil Burleigh on behalf of the North Herts Archaeological Society. We agree with his observations also. This site is in an archaeological alert area, a very sensitive area for Pirton's history and archaeology. The application has not met Pirton Neighbourhood Plan policy 8.2 – proposals should demonstrate that they have consulted and respected appropriate sources of information; and 8.4 – planning applications for development affecting archaeological alert areas should be submitted with a desk-based archaeological survey and, where necessary, a field evaluation *etc.*

This has been required by NHDC in at least two applications for single properties in Royal Oak Lane in the near past, and given the sensitivity of the area, should be enforced here. The proposals are also contrary to Local Development Plan policies SP 13 and HE1 and HE 4.

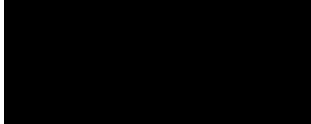
Flooding.

Whilst it is correct that the site is in Flood Zone one, that is not the end of the matter. In heavy or prolonged rain, much of the surface water from the High Street runs down into

Burge End Lane. His proposal will add a house and largely tarmac with the run-off pouring down a steeply sloped drive, adding to flooding issues regularly occurring outside Hammonds Farm and further down Burge End Lane.

We accept that the site is within the Pirton Development Boundary, and that it would meet Pirton Neighbourhood Plan policy 1.2 and 1.4, being for a two-bedroom dwelling house. This is not sufficient to overcome the objections above.

Yours sincerely,



Jill Rogers  
Chairman, Pirton Parish Council