



PETER GEORGE TOWN PLANNING

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09 March 2026

Development Control
North Hertfordshire District Council
Council Offices
Gernon Road
Letchworth Garden City
SG6 3JF

Dear Sirs,

Full Planning Application: Glencoe Villa, Snailswell Lane, Ickleford, SG5 3TS

Full Planning Application: Erection of a detached five-bedroom dwelling with associated detached garage and outbuildings, access, car parking and hard and soft landscaping following the demolition of existing structures and hardstanding (part-retrospective application)

Introduction

Peter George Town Planning has been instructed by Mr & Mrs Del Basso to submit an application for full planning permission for the proposed development described above. The purpose of this letter is to summarise the history of the site and make the planning case for why the application should be supported and permission granted.

The application is supported by:

- Drawings: P01A, P02A, P03A, P04A, P05, P06, P07 & P08B
- This covering letter
- Duly completed and signed application form and ownership certificate
- Materials Schedule
- Proposed Landscaping Plan
- Sustainability and Energy Construction Statement



- Phase I and II Geo-Environmental Reports and Remediation Method Statement

Background

Planning permission (application ref. 22/00172/FP) was granted on 28 March 2022 for the erection of a 4-bedroom dwelling on the site. This followed an earlier consent for a detached dwelling (application ref. 20/01168/FP) granted 27 October 2020 for a three-bedroom dwelling.

This planning permission was first varied by application ref. 23/00505/S73, and subsequently by application ref. 24/01191/NMA. These sought revisions to the design, form and size of the dwelling originally approved under the 2022 consent. The NMA approved in 2024 introduced a fifth bedroom, albeit the description of development of the host consent wasn't amended to reflect this change.

All relevant pre-commencement conditions associated with application ref. 23/00505/S73 have been discharged, and construction of the development began in March 2025. Subsequently, a further planning application (application ref. 25/01822/FP) was granted by the Council for a revised version of the previously approved dwelling. It is this consent that has thus been implemented and this version of the development that is currently under construction.

The Proposals

The proposed description of development is as follows:

“Erection of a detached five-bedroom dwelling with associated detached garage and outbuildings, access, car parking and hard and soft landscaping following the demolition of existing structures and hardstanding (retrospective application).”

The proposed dwelling would largely be as per that approved under application ref. 25/01822/FP in terms of its design, form, dimensions and architectural characteristics. However, the previously approved single-storey flat roof extension to the west-facing flank elevation of the proposed dwelling has been fully enclosed compared with this earlier consent. Furthermore, a detached garage is proposed immediately adjacent to the driveway, and two detached outbuildings proposed to the rear of the dwelling.



Planning Discussion

Principle of Development

The principle of the erection of a detached dwelling on the site has been established through the grant of several earlier consents the most recent of which is application ref. 25/01822/FP which has been lawfully implemented and is extant. As set out in the officer report, the planning officer noted that it was considered that the proposal would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt on two fronts: 1) it would utilise previously developed land and the replacement development would not have a substantial impact on openness, and 2) the site was considered to be grey belt. Accordingly, it was found to not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Notwithstanding, it is worth discussing the merits of this application in reference to the exceptions set out in the Framework.

Paragraph 154(g) sets out as not inappropriate development in the Green Belt:

“g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.”

The proposed infill section to the previously approved single-storey side projection would not result in any outward expansion of the approved dwelling and would thus fall within its consented footprint. Accordingly, this part of the proposed development would not result in the proposed dwelling having a greater impact on openness than the approved dwelling. The proposed outbuildings would add additional built form to the site but set against the size and context of the approved dwelling and in light of their positioning in close proximity to the main dwelling, it is not considered that they would result in a substantial impact to the openness of the Green Belt. Accordingly, our view is that the proposed development would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt and thus that it would not be inappropriate development on that basis.

Grey Belt

The revised Framework introduces the concept of 'grey belt' This is defined in the Framework as follows:



“For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, ‘grey belt’ is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143. ‘Grey belt’ excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.”

Given the determination of application ref. 25/01822/FP it appears to be common ground between the applicant and the Council that the site is grey belt. Indeed, with due consideration given to the PPG guidance regarding the consideration of ‘grey belt’ matters, we consider that the site makes no contribution to purpose (a) of the Green Belt given that the site is not adjacent to a large-built up area (Ickleford is a village, whereas the PPG confirms that large built-up areas refer to towns). The site furthermore makes no contribution to purposes (b) and (d) given that it firstly makes no contribution in preventing coalescence between towns, and secondly that it does not lie within the setting of a historic town.

Accordingly, the application site does **not** make strong contribution to the three relevant Green Belt purposes and thus meets the definition of grey belt; a position that the previous case officer clearly agreed with. It is now necessary to consider Paragraph 155 of the Framework which states that:

“The development of homes, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should also not be regarded as inappropriate where:

- a. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;***
- b. There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed;***
- c. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework; and***
- d. Where applicable the development proposed meets the ‘Golden Rules’ requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157 below.”***

Our comments on each of the above is set out below:



a) Regarding the first part of this criterion, for the reasons discussed above, the application site meets the definition of grey belt.

Turning to the second part of this criterion, the site makes a limited contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt given its high degree of self-containment, and limited connectivity with the wider strategic Green Belt. Accordingly, the development of this site would not fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan.

b) Based on recent appeal decisions and the Council's own monitoring data, the Council are currently only able to demonstrate a 2.6-year supply of land for housing. Accordingly, there is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed.

c) The proposed development is located within an existing settlement and is situated near to local services, facilities and public transport options. The site is therefore in a sustainable location with respect to paragraphs 110 and 115 of the Framework.

d) Not applicable: Development is not major development.

As discussed above, it is considered that the proposed development meets the definition of grey belt land and is moreover in full accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 155 of the revised Framework. Accordingly, it should **not** be regarded as inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Accordingly, it is considered that the proposals would be in accordance with LP Policy SP5 and Section 13 of the Framework.

Design & Visual Considerations

The planning officer noted in his delegated report for the original approval that he didn't feel that the proposed dwelling would be out of character with its surroundings given the size, scale, and design of other dwellings in this area at the edge of Ickleford and that, subject to suitable materials being used, the proposed development would be acceptable in design terms.

As discussed, the proposed infill extension would not result in any increase in the overall footprint of the approved dwelling and would have a design and materiality consistent



with the existing. It is thus considered to be well designed and would have an acceptable visual impact.

The detached garage and associated garden buildings have all been designed in order to be in keeping with the detailed design and characteristics of the main house and, to that end, would complement and be read in conjunction with the principal dwelling. They would all be single-storey and be read as being clearly subservient to the main house which would be the dominant feature on the site. Moreover, given the degree to which the proposed dwelling and the associated garage and outbuildings are to be set back from Snailswell Lane, they would have little to no prominence in the street and they would thus have little public impact.

Accordingly, it is not considered that there would be any reasons to object to these proposals in design terms.

Other Matters

Ecology

Given that the application is made retrospectively, the proposed development is exempt from mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain. Otherwise, matters relating to the ecological effects of the proposed development have been considered under the previous application which has now been implemented on site.

Sustainability and Energy

A Sustainability and Energy Construction Statement is submitted with the application as per the Council's validation requirements.

Land Contamination

The submitted Phase I and II Geo-Environmental Reports set out the facts of the situation with respect to contamination, and a proposed remediation strategy is set out in the Remediation Method Statement. Subject to the remediation strategy being followed and verified as necessary, it is not considered that land contamination should be an issue subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the remediation method statement to be followed and a verification report submitted for approval pre occupation.



Summary & Conclusions

This letter supports an application for planning permission for a five-bedroom dwelling, essentially as a replacement consent for application ref. 25/01822/FP which has been lawfully implemented and is extant.

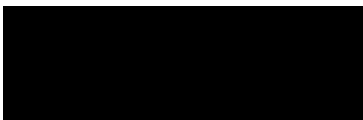
As set out in the foregoing, the principle of the erection of a detached dwelling in this location is established by virtue of the extant consent; albeit the principle of development would not be inappropriate development in any event as it would involve the development of grey belt land.

Otherwise, the proposals would be largely in keeping with the character and/or nature of the extant scheme and are considered to be acceptable in planning policy terms. The additional aspects put forward under this application such as the detached garage and associated outbuildings are acceptable in principle in accordance with the grey belt status of the land, but have moreover been sympathetically designed and are considered to be an acceptable component of the scheme.

Accordingly, there are not considered to be any material planning reasons to refuse the application, and it is hereby respectfully requested that planning permission be granted for the proposed development.

Please contact me if you require any further information in order to determine the application.

Yours sincerely,



Tom Donovan BA (Hons) MA MRTPI, Director

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