

Alex Howard
North Hertfordshire District Council
Development and Conservation
PO Box 10613
Nottingham
NG6 6DH

24th September 2024

Dear Alex,

38 Heathfield, Royston

Permission in Principle Stage 1 application for residential development to provide 1 no. dwelling within the back garden at 38 Heathfield with vehicular access to Heathfield and including demolition of existing garage and associated works.

Please find enclosed a Permission in Principle Stage 1 application for the development of part of the back garden of 38 Heathfield for a new dwelling. Vehicular access to the new dwelling would involve the demolition of the existing garage at the property and relocation of surface parking at the front of the property. Apart from the demolition of the garage, the remaining part of the existing dwelling at No.38 Heathfield will be retained.

This letter sets out the principle planning case for the development proposed. Along with this letter, the following documents accompany the application:

- Location plan identifying the site boundaries.
- Appeal decision APP/X1925/W/23/3326023.
- Decision notice reference 24/01347/FP.
- Officer's delegated report for 24/01347/FP.

Site Background and Relevant Planning History

The application site to the rear of 38 Heathfield is located within the built-up area of Royston. This back garden of No.38 backs onto Green Drift, a residential estate located to the north of Heathfield. There is an existing access to No.38 from Heathfield.

1st & 2nd Floor, 2 West Street, Ware, Herts, SG12 9EE
Tel: 07710016079 • **Email:** peter@pjbplanning.co.uk • www.pjbplanning.co.uk

The general character along Heathfield comprises detached properties, that back onto Green Drift. To the west of the application site there is an exception to the general building line fronting Heathfield to the west of the application site, where a detached property at 40 Heathfield sits behind a smaller bungalow, known as The Cottage (40A Heathfield). The neighbouring property at No.40 does however share its vehicular access onto Heathfield with The Cottage. This means that No.40 continues to back onto Green Drift with fencing and landscaping along the roadside.

Although no detailed plans are included with this Stage 1 application, the proposed new dwelling within the back garden area of No.38 Heathfield would seek to replicate the layout of the next door property at No.40 Heathfield. The proposed dwelling in this application would front southwards and back onto Green Drift, in the same way as No.40 Heathfield.

A parking area will be provided in front of the new dwelling for at least 2 No. vehicles and driveway is proposed to the western side of the existing property at No.38 by demolishing the existing attached garage. This will provide driveway access to both the existing and new dwellings from Heathfield. It is proposed to widen the existing access onto Heathfield.

A private garden area will be retained for the existing bungalow at No.38, and the proposed dwelling will have its own private garden backing onto Green Drift, in the same way as the neighbouring property to the west.

The detailed designs for this scheme would be secured through the Permission in Principle Stage 2 Technical Details.

In terms of relevant planning history, the following decisions are applicable to the consideration of this Permission in Principle Stage 1 application.

On the 9th April 2024, an appeal was dismissed for the development of a single storey dwelling on the back garden of No.38 Heathfield under reference APP/X1925/W/23/3326023 (LPA reference 23/00830/FP). A copy of the decision letter is included with this application.

Whilst the appeal was dismissed, the appeal inspector made the following statement in paragraph 10 of the decision letter:

“The council consider this to be an accessible location for new housing and therefore the principle would be acceptable with regard to LP policy SP2. They accept that the proposal would bring social and economic benefits from its construction and the provision of a new dwelling. The more efficient use of land and the social and economic contributions the occupants of a new dwelling would bring would also offer support for the proposal. Reference is also made to the environmental benefits incorporated into the design. Although this represents only a single dwelling, these matters, taken together, offer considerable weight in favour of the proposal.”

1st & 2nd Floor, 2 West Street, Ware, Herts, SG12 9EE

Tel: 07710016079 • **Email:** peter@pjbplanning.co.uk • www.pjbplanning.co.uk

A subsequent planning application was submitted on 26th June 2024 for a revised scheme for a single dwelling under LPA reference 24/01347/FP. Whilst the application was refused planning permission, the Council confirmed the following about the principle of development in paragraph 4.3.2 of the officer's delegated report:

"Policy SP2 of the Local Plan states that the majority of the district's housing development will be located within the settlement boundaries of the major towns. Royston is one of the major towns in North Herts and the site is within the settlement boundary. As such, the site is considered sustainable and appropriate for new housing development. The principle of development is therefore acceptable, in accordance with Policy SP2 of the Local Plan."

Whilst the design and layout of the proposed development is considered at Technical details Stage 2, it should be noted that paragraphs 4.3.20 to 4.3.22 within the Council's delegated report for 24/01347/FP, the Council confirmed that the amount of development proposed (one new dwelling) was considered acceptable in layout and design in accordance with Policies SP9 and D1 of the Adopted Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF. This therefore confirms the principle of the amount of development proposed within the site boundary of this Stage 1 application is acceptable.

It is therefore clear from both the appeal decision and more recent revised planning application, the Council does not have an objection to the principle of a new dwelling on the back garden land at No.38 Heathfield within the application site boundary.

North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031

The current Local Plan for the District was adopted in November 2022 and sets out the local planning policies when considering the acceptability of the principle of the proposed development in this application.

The application site is located within the built-up area of Royston wherein Adopted Local Plan Policy SP2 confirms that 80% of the Districts housing development will be provided. In the case of Royston this amounts to the delivery of 1,899 houses between 2011 and 2031.

It is therefore this policy that sets out the acceptability of the principle of development at the application site for a new dwelling. This is referred to in paragraph 4.3.2 of the recent Council delegated report for application 24/01347/FP.

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 2 of 2023 version of the NPPF highlights the overarching purpose of the planning system is to contribute to achieving sustainable development, considered against economic, social and environmental objectives.

Paragraph 10 of the NPPF states that at the heart of the Framework there is a “*presumption in favour of sustainable development*”, and Paragraph 11 goes on to state that development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF highlights the overarching objectives to achieve sustainable development from an economic, social and environmental perspective.

The Council’s delegated report for 24/01347/FP confirmed in paragraph 4.3.5 that the proposed new dwelling at No.38 Heathfield complied with the three objectives of sustainability as set out in Section 2 of the NPPF.

Section 5 of the NPPF provides further guidance on delivering a sufficient supply of homes, and paragraph 60 highlights the need to provide a significant boost for new homes, to meet housing needs, and to develop land with permission without unnecessary delay. This therefore supports the principle of a new dwelling on this application site, which would constitute a sustainable form of development.

This guidance within the NPPF therefore supports the principle of the development proposed in this application, and encourages Council’s to grant planning permission.

Conclusion

The proposals in this Permission in Principle Stage 1 application represents a form of sustainable development within the built-up area of Royston that is supported by Policy SP2 of the Adopted Local Plan and also guidance contained within the NPPF.

On this basis, we respectfully request that the Council approve this Stage 1 application for Permission in Principle.

If you have any queries about the application, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Peter Biggs BSc (Hons) DIP TP MRTPI
Director
PJB Planning Ltd