

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS:

*NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL, PO BOX 10613, NOTTINGHAM,
NG6 6DW*



Date: 20 May 2019
Our Ref: 19/00832/PRE
Contact: Heather Lai
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Dear [REDACTED]

**Pre Application Advice: Proposed one 3 bed chalet bungalow within rear garden with access onto Little Lane
12 Davis Crescent, Pirton, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 3RB**

PLEASE QUOTE THE FOLLOWING REFERENCE: 19/00832/PRE ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE.

Site context and history:

The application site is located within Pirton village, and is not subject to any restrictions; it is outside both the Archaeological Priority Area and the Conservation Area. The existing dwelling is in a run of four and is a two storey brick finished arts and crafts style dwelling.

The pre-application proposal is for a three bedroom chalet bungalow dwelling, which would provide family sized accommodation. The new dwelling would be accessed via the rear of the property, on Little Lane. There appears to be an existing garage structure relating to no. 12 currently in this position (refer to site history).

No. 12 has the following planning history:

87/01431/1: Erection of single storey rear extension. Approved.

89/00630/1: Extension to existing rear conservatory (as amended by plans received 14.8.89). Approved.



NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL, COUNCIL OFFICES, GERNON ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG6 3JF

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: DAVID SCHOLES

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02/00740/1HH: Detached double garage following demolition of existing (as amended by plans received 18/07/2002 and 25/07/2002). Approved.

Principle of proposal:

I note that there have been several other 'backlands' developments which front Little Lane, including to the south of the site at Poppyfields (00/00362/1: *Detached dwelling with detached single garage*) and West Lodge (00/01861/1: *1 three bedroom dwelling with attached garage*). A dwelling to the rear of no. 8 Davis Crescent to the north of the site, was also approved in 2016 (16/01686/1: *Erection of one 3-bed detached dwelling with single attached garage and creation of new vehicular access off Little Lane*).

While there have been a number of houses built along this narrow lane over the years and the 2016 officer's report confirms that the principle of this 'was established some years ago', I do have a number of concerns regarding the current pre-application site. Given the size of the rear garden to no. 12, there *may* be some scope for a small unit to the rear, however I do not think the proposed family sized dwelling in this location is acceptable.

Design:

In terms of the detailed design and materiality of the proposed dwelling, no elevational or floor plans have been provided and therefore I cannot comment on this, or any potential harm to the streetscene (Little Lane). While I note the proposal is for a chalet bungalow, without further details it is impossible to determine what the potential harm or suitability of a dwelling of this size/in this location would be.

Amenity:

Policy 57 of the saved Local Plan recommends a minimum back garden depth of 15m, and a private amenity space of 75m². According to the site plan (10-002) I do not see how a private amenity space can be achieved; it appears the proposed private amenity space to the side/rear of the proposed dwelling would be less than 50m² with a rear garden depth beyond the dwelling of approximately 5m. For a family sized dwelling this would be unacceptable and not supported as part of a future application, even for a smaller unit I am not convinced based on the current information that a good level of private amenity space could be provided.

Turning to the relationship between the host dwelling (no. 12 Davis Crescent) and the proposed dwelling, it appears that there would be a lack of privacy between the two dwellings that would result in an unacceptable standard of residential amenity. It appears there would be a maximum distance of 17m between the rear wall of the proposed dwelling and the rear wall of the extension to the host building. This unneighbourly relationship would have to be overcome as part of a planning application, demonstrating sight lines and submission of accurate floor

plans from host dwelling, to determine that an acceptable standard of amenity could be achieved. I currently cannot see how this could be achieved.

I note the previous approvals for dwellings to the rear of nos. 8 and 16 (00/00362/1, 00/01861/1, 16/01686/1), however in each of these cases it appears that larger private amenity spaces were provided, and there was a greater set back (in excess of 20m) between the dwellings. This is not the case with the site at no. 12 and I do not think that the erection of a family sized dwelling to the rear of the property would result in an acceptable level of amenity for current occupants of the host building, or future occupants of the dwelling. As stated above, I remain unconvinced that even a small sized unit could achieve an acceptable standard of residential amenity.

Given the relationship of the proposed dwelling from adjacent dwellings to the north and south along Little Lane I consider there would not be a material loss of light or increased sense of enclosure. While it is likely there would not be a material loss of privacy owing to the existing boundary treatments, full consideration of this, and positioning of any fenestration would have to be considered as part of a future planning application, following submission of a full set of plans.

Parking:

Based on the details submitted with the pre-application advice request, it is unclear what the existing arrangements for parking at the site are. It would appear there is currently sufficient garage/parking space for the host dwelling, no. 12 which is accessed via Little Lane. Full details of the existing and proposed parking arrangements for the host dwelling should be provided as part of a future planning application. If this is to be from the front of the site (eg on Davis Crescent), and will require the creation of new spaces and a vehicle crossover, I suggest you discuss this with HCC Highways separately. Owing to their separate charging schedule they do not respond to planning pre-application advice requests. I recommend discussing with them also the proposed turning space and vehicle crossover for the proposed unit, however I realise that this may be as per the existing arrangements to the rear of the site.

At present, sufficient information to demonstrate the site can support parking and turning space for four vehicle parking spaces – a minimum of two for each dwelling – has not been provided. Therefore I cannot confirm that this would be considered acceptable as part of a future planning application.

Landscaping:

The proposed dwelling appears to include a large area of hard surfacing to the front of the proposed dwelling, adjacent Little Lane. While I note the existing situation, where there is an existing double car garage and hard standing to the rear of no. 12, if a dwelling is erected to the

rear I would recommend the provision of some soft landscaping to this area to provide a more attractive frontage to the dwelling and improve the character of the area.

Conclusion:

As discussed above, I do not consider the proposed erection of a family sized dwelling to the rear of no. 12 Davis Crescent would be supported as part of a future application. While the principle of dwellings to the rear of Davis Crescent – fronting Little Lane has previously been accepted, I do not consider that no. 12 has a large enough site to successfully support an additional dwelling. A family sized dwelling, and potentially any dwelling would result in an unacceptable standard of residential amenity for existing and proposed occupants. If you can demonstrate a strong planning case for how this could be provided, robust evidence should be submitted as part of a future application.

As addressed in the relevant paragraphs above, issues relating to highways and parking, appropriate landscaping and the detailed design of a dwelling would have to be addressed, and overcome to be supported as part of a future application. You should pay adherence to the Pirton Neighbourhood Plan as well as the Local Plan. In particular I point you to Policy PNP 13 of the Neighbourhood Plan, which states that larger houses (3+ bedrooms) should provide a minimum of 3 parking spaces.

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Simon Ellis.

Simon Ellis
Development & Conservation Manager

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