

EASTWICK AND GILSTON PARISH COUNCIL PROTOCOL FOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS

This protocol is applicable to all planning applications received by the Eastwick and Gilston Parish Council.

Major Developments

The District Plan that shapes the future of East Herts to 2033 was adopted in September 2018. Policy GA1 for the Gilston Area allows removal of a large section of Metropolitan Green Belt, the building of approximately 3,000 dwellings and associated infrastructure during the plan period to 2033 with the potential for a further 7,000 dwellings to follow.

The Parish Council has focused engagement with East Herts Council (EHC) and Places for People (PfP), the primary landowner, on District Plan matters through the Hunsdon and Eastwick & Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group that is mandated to represent the Parish Council and reports to the Parish Council.

Alterations and extensions to a single property

Parish Councillors will base their assessment of an application for small to medium alterations and extensions to a single property on East Herts Council policies HOU11 and DES4 of the 2018 District Plan. Where applicable in accordance with Policy GBR1 of the District Plan, planning applications within the Green Belt will be considered in line with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework. 143 - 147: Planning applications within the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt will be considered in accordance with Policy GBR2 of the District Plan.

If necessary, the Clerk will contact the East Herts Council planning department to request an extension period to allow this to happen. Planning applications shall be approached in the following way.

1. When a planning application is received by the Clerk it shall be circulated to all-Councillors who will nominate two Parish Councillors as designates to liaise with the applicant and immediate neighbours
2. The designated Parish Councillors will inform the applicant of the Parish Council protocol and visit the immediate neighbours of the applicant to see if they are aware of the application and whether they wish to comment on it. Although the Parish Council will take such comments into consideration, the neighbours should be encouraged to write directly to the planning department.

If neighbours have an objection to an application, the designated Parish Councillors shall refer the item for debate during the next Parish Council meeting. If necessary, the Clerk shall be asked to contact the planning department to request an extension period to allow this to happen, If this is not possible an urgent meeting will be called to discuss this.

If contact with neighbours is not possible, or they have no objections to make, the designated Parish Councillors shall inform all members of the Parish Council.

3. In cases where Parish Councillors have no objections to an application, and there have been no objections raised by neighbours the Clerk shall be asked to write to the planning department. to inform them that '*The Parish Council has no comment to make on the application*'.

If Parish Councillors or neighbours have raised an objection to an application, this will be taken to full council meeting for further discussion (see clause 4).

4. When an application has been debated during a Parish Council meeting and assessed against policies HOU11 and DES4 of the 2018 District Plan and where applicable Policies GBR1 or GBR2 including assessment of any neighbours' objections the Clerk shall be asked to write to the planning department to inform them of the Parish Council's conclusion.

There are two types of response as follows:

- The Parish Council objects to the application for the following reasons.
- The Parish Council has no comment to make on the applications

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inappropriate development, they should not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling; the Council is also concerned with the cumulative impact of development in the countryside.

Policy HOU11 Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings, Residential Outbuildings and Works Within Residential Curtilages

Proposals for:

- extensions and alterations to dwellings;
- residential outbuildings or extensions to existing outbuildings; and
- works within residential curtilages.

will be considered against the following criteria:

(a) be of a size, scale, mass, form, siting, design and materials of construction that are appropriate to the character, appearance and setting of the existing dwelling and/or the surrounding area, and extensions should generally appear as a subservient addition to the dwelling;

(b) side extensions at first floor level or above should ensure appropriate space is left between the flank wall of the extension and the common curtilage with a neighbouring property (as a general rule a space of 1 metre will be the minimum acceptable), to safeguard the character and appearance of the street scene and prevent a visually damaging 'terracing' effect;

(c) flat roofed extensions, except those on the ground floor, will be refused as visually undesirable other than in those exceptional circumstances where the character of the original dwelling allows a flat-roofed design to be appropriately incorporated, or it represents a sustainable or innovative design approach;

(d) roof dormers may be acceptable if appropriate to the design and character of the dwelling and its surroundings. Dormers should generally be of limited extent and modest proportions, so as not to dominate the existing roof form.

Policy DES4 Design of Development

I. All development proposals, including extensions to existing buildings, must be of a high standard of design and layout to reflect and promote local distinctiveness. Proposals will be expected to:

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(a) Make the best possible use of the available land by respecting or improving upon the character of the site and the surrounding area, in terms of its scale, height, massing (volume, shape), orientation, siting, layout, density, building materials (colour, texture), landscaping, environmental assets, and design features, having due regard to the design opportunities and constraints of a site;

(b) Incorporate homes, buildings and neighbourhoods that are flexible to future adaptation, including the changing needs of occupants and users, and changes in wider employment and social trends;

(c) Avoid significant detrimental impacts on the amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties and land, and ensure that their environments are not harmed by noise and disturbance or by inadequate daylight, privacy or overshadowing;

(d) Incorporate high quality innovative design, new technologies and construction techniques, including zero or low carbon energy and water efficient, design and sustainable construction methods. Proposals for residential and commercial development should seek to make appropriate provision for high speed broadband connectivity, ensuring that Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) is provided;

(e) Make provision for the storage of bins and ancillary household equipment. Garages and driveways should be capable of accommodating family sized vehicles. Dwelling design and layout should make provision for electric vehicle charging points in safe and accessible locations;

(f) All new residential developments should meet the requirements of Policy HOU7, and ensure all internal rooms are of an appropriate size and dimension so that the intended function of each room can be satisfactorily achieved. All dwellings shall be identified by their square metreage.

II. Proposals must not prejudice the development opportunities of surrounding sites.

III. Development proposals which create new or have a significant impact on the public realm should:

(a) Maximise legibility and accessibility of the public realm through the layout of buildings, landmarks, use of colour, landscaping, paving, high quality public art, street furniture and infrastructure including clear and legible signposting, rest places and public toilets, in a way that maintains uncluttered spaces and enables easy navigation and movement through the space;

(b) Maximise opportunities for urban greening, for example through planting of trees and other soft landscaping wherever possible;

(c) Avoid creating 'left-over' spaces with no clear purpose or function;

(d) Ensure that long-term maintenance and management arrangements are in place for the public realm as appropriate.

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(e) Engage the Hertfordshire Design Review Panel as part of the Pre-application stage and throughout the Development Management process where appropriate.

National Planning Policy Framework. NPPF paragraphs 143 - 147:

Proposals affecting the Green Belt

143. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
144. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
145. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:
- a. buildings for agriculture and forestry;
 - b. the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
 - c. the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
 - d. the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
 - e. limited infilling in villages;
 - f. limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
 - g. limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
 - i. not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or
 - ii. not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.
146. Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:
- a. mineral extraction;
 - b. engineering operations;
 - c. local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
 - d. the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;
 - e. material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
 - f. development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.
147. When located in the Green Belt, elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances if projects are to proceed. Such very special circumstances may include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources.

Policy GBR2 Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt

I. In order to maintain the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt as a valued countryside resource, the following types of development will be permitted, provided that they are compatible with the character and appearance of the rural area:

- (a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- (b) facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, including equine development in accordance with CFLR6 (Equine Development), and for cemeteries;
- (c) new employment generating uses where they are sustainably located, in accordance with Policy ED2 (Rural Economy);
- (d) the replacement, extension or alteration of a building, provided the size, scale, mass, form, siting, design and materials of construction are appropriate to the character, appearance and setting of the site and/or surrounding areas;
- (e) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings) in sustainable locations, where appropriate to the character, appearance and setting of the site and/or surrounding area;
- (f) rural exception housing in accordance with Policy HOU4 (Rural Exception Affordable Housing Sites);

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(g) accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in accordance with Policy HOU9 (Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) or Non-Nomadic Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, in accordance with Policy HOU10 (New Park Home Sites for Non-Nomadic Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople);

(h) development identified in an adopted Neighbourhood Plan.