

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 8th AUGUST 2025

Case No: 25/00756/FUL

Proposal: Erection of three-bedroom bungalow with garage and associated works (inc new planting and creation of off-street parking and turning to both existing and proposed properties).

Location: Land to the rear of 34-38 Ackerman Street, Eaton Socon

Applicant: AWJ Usher & Sons Ltd

Grid Ref: 517098 258654

Date of Registration: 24.04.2025

Parish: St Neots

RECOMMENDATION - REFUSE

This application is referred to the Development Management Committee (DMC) as the officer's recommendation is contrary to that of the Town Council and the site is within a Conservation Area.

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

- 1.1 This application seeks approval for the erection of one bungalow with a garage and associated works on land to the rear of Nos 34-38 Ackerman Street, Eaton Socon. The submitted Design and Access Statement indicates that the site has previously been in use as a pub garden but has seen more built development (additional toilets, 'cellar' and stores, smoking shelters etc) with areas of hardstanding.
- 1.2 The application site is within the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan boundary and is located within the St Neots Conservation Area. The application site is also directly south of the Grade II Listed Building of No. 36 Ackerman Street, Eaton Socon.
- 1.3 This application has been accompanied by the following:
 - Planning, Design and Access Statement (including Heritage Statement);
 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal;
 - Biodiversity Net Gain Report.
- 1.4 Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'
- 2.2 The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):
- delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
 - building a strong, competitive economy;
 - achieving well-designed, beautiful and safe places;
 - conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment
- 2.3 Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.

For full details visit the government website [National Guidance](#)

3. PLANNING POLICIES

- 3.1 Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019)
- LP1: Amount of Development
 - LP2: Strategy for Development
 - LP4: Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery
 - LP5: Flood Risk
 - LP6: Waste Water Management
 - LP7: Spatial Planning Areas
 - LP11: Design Context
 - LP12: Design Implementation
 - LP14: Amenity
 - LP15: Surface Water
 - LP16: Sustainable Travel
 - LP17: Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement
 - LP21: Town Centre Vitality and Viability
 - LP22: Local Services and Community Facilities
 - LP25: Housing Mix
 - LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 - LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows
 - LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings
- 3.2 St Neots Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029 – adopted February 2016

- Policy A3: Design
- Policy PT1: Sustainable Travel
- Policy PT2: Vehicle Parking Standards for Residential Development
- Policy P4: Flooding
- Policy SS1: Introduction
- Policy SS2: Utilising Historic Buildings
- Policy SS3: Service and Provision

3.3 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance:

- Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024)
- Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017)
- Developer Contributions SPD 2011
- Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD (2022)
- Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2017
- Annual Monitoring Review regarding housing land supply (2024)
- St Neots Conservation Area Character Assessment (2006)

Local policies are viewable at <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk>

3.4 The National Design Guide (2021):

- C1 - Understand and relate well to the site, its local and wider context
- I1 - Respond to existing local character and identity
- I2 - Well-designed, high quality and attractive
- B2 - Appropriate building types and forms
- M3 - Well-considered parking, servicing and utilities infrastructure for all users
- N3 - Support rich and varied biodiversity
- H1 - Healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environment
- H2 - Well-related to external amenity and public spaces
- H3 - Attention to detail: storage, waste, servicing and utilities.

For full details visit the government website

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 24/01165/FUL - Change of use from public house to residential dwelling – Approved – No. 38 Ackerman Street, Eaton Socon.

5. CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 St Neots Town Council – Support the proposal noting that it makes efficient use of the site and is a satisfactory proposal in terms of scale and pattern of development.
- 5.2 Cambridgeshire County Council Highway Authority – The proposed development is acceptable, subject to the imposition of conditions on any planning permission granted.
- 5.3 Huntingdonshire District Council Conservation Officer - Objects to the proposed development noting it would cause less than substantial harm to the St Neots Conservation Area and adjacent Listed Building. More detailed comments are included in the main body of the report.
- 5.4 Huntingdonshire District Council Environmental Health Officer – No objections to the proposal with regards to environmental health matters.

6. REPRESENTATIONS

- 6.1 Four letters of objection were received during the course of the application. The concerns raised have been summarised below:
- Scale and design of the proposed dwelling (overbearing scale);
 - Highway safety concerns (lack of off-street car parking);
 - Location of bin store.

7. ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 When determining planning applications, it is necessary to establish what weight should be given to each plan's policies in order to come to a decision. The following legislation, government policy and guidance outline how this should be done.
- 7.2 As set out within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 38(6)) and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Section 70(2)) in dealing with planning applications the Local Planning Authority shall have regard to have provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. This is reiterated within paragraph 48 of the NPPF (2024). The development plan is defined in Section 38(3)(b) of the 2004 Act as "the development plan documents (taken as a whole) that have been adopted or approved in that area".
- 7.3 In Huntingdonshire the Development Plan (relevant to this application) consists of:
- Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019)
 - Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2021)
 - St Neots Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029

- 7.4 The statutory term 'material considerations' has been broadly construed to include any consideration relevant in the circumstances which bears on the use or development of the land: *Cala Homes (South) Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government & Anor* [2011] EWHC 97 (Admin); [2011] 1 P. & C.R. 22, per Lindblom J. Whilst accepting that the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the Development Plan, paragraph 2 confirms that it is a material consideration and significant weight is given to this in determining applications.
- 7.5 The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
- The Principle of Development
 - Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets
 - Residential Amenity
 - Highway Safety, Access and parking provision
 - Flood Risk and Surface Water
 - Biodiversity
 - Accessible and Adaptable Homes
 - Water Efficiency
 - Developer Obligations

The Principle of Development

Housing Land Supply

- 7.6 NPPF paragraph 78 requires the Council to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against our housing requirement. A substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory approach for establishing housing requirements was introduced on 12th December 2024 in the revised NPPF and associated NPPG (the standard method).
- 7.7 As Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 is now over 5 years old it is necessary to demonstrate a five year housing land supply (5YHLS) based on the housing requirement set using the standard method. NPPF paragraph 78 also requires provision of a buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. As Huntingdonshire has successfully exceeded the requirements of the Housing Delivery Test a 5% buffer is required here. The 5 year housing land requirement including a 5% buffer is 5,501 homes. The current 5YHLS is 3.88 years' supply.
- 7.8 As a result of this, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied for decision-taking in accordance with paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 8 of the NPPF in relation to applications involving the provision of housing. This is generally referred to as 'the tilted balance'. While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated the Local Plan policies concerned with the supply

and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.

Location and suitability of the site

- 7.9 Policy LP2 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 (the Local Plan) sets out the overarching development strategy for Huntingdonshire through the plan period. The main objectives are:
- Concentrate development in locations which provide, or have the potential to provide, the most comprehensive range of services and facilities;
 - Direct substantial new development to two strategic expansion locations of sufficient scale to form successful, functioning new communities
 - Provide opportunities for communities to achieve local development aspirations for housing, employment, commercial or community related schemes
 - Support a thriving rural economy;
 - Protect the character of existing settlements and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the surrounding countryside;
 - Conserve and enhance the historic environment; and
 - Provide complementary green infrastructure enhancement and provision to balance recreational and biodiversity needs and to support climate change adaptation.
- 7.10 Policy LP2 directs approximately a quarter of the objectively assessed need for housing (together with a limited amount of employment growth) to sites dispersed across the Key Service Centres and Small Settlements in order to support the vitality of these communities and provide flexibility and diversity in the housing supply. In addition, rural exception, small and windfall sites will be permitted on sites which are in conformity with other policies of the plan, thereby providing further flexibility in the housing supply.
- 7.11 Policy LP2 is within the Development Strategy chapter of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, and is therefore considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications for residential development. Notwithstanding this, weight should still be given to Policy LP2 given that it directs development in locations which provide, or have the potential to provide, the most comprehensive range of services and facilities which is consistent with the NPPF.
- 7.12 The site is located within the built-up area of Eaton Socon, which is located within the St Neots Spatial Planning Area as defined by the adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. As such, Policy LP7 (Spatial Planning Areas) is considered relevant in this

instance. Policy LP7 of the adopted Local Plan states that a proposal for housing development on a site which is additional to those allocated in the Local Plan will be supported where it is appropriately located within a built-up area of an identified Spatial Planning Area.

- 7.13 Given the proposal seeks approval for the erection of 1 residential dwellings within the built-up area of Eaton Socon, the development is therefore considered to be situated in an appropriate location and acceptable in accordance with LP7 of the Local Plan.
- 7.14 NPPF Para 84 states: Planning decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside. NPPF Para 110 states: The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.
- 7.15 It is considered that the development would have access to services and facilities within Eaton Socon, and also the means to access larger settlements such as the market town of St Neots through sustainable modes of transport. The development would therefore not result in the development of isolated homes in either the edge of settlement or countryside, nor would the future occupiers have an over-reliance on the private motor vehicle as other options are available in the settlement.
- 7.16 It is determined therefore that the site is considered to be sustainable for the amount of development hereby proposed.

Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets

- 7.17 The Local Planning Authority is required to ensure that special regard is given to preserving the listed buildings and their settings in relation to Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Local Planning Authority is also required to ensure that with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 at Section 72. This is also reflected in Policy LP34 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 7.18 Policy LP11 of the Local Plan states that a proposal will be supported where it is demonstrated that it responds positively to its context. Policy LP12 states that new development will be

expected to be well designed and that a proposal will be supported where it can be demonstrated that it contributes positively to the area's character and identity and successfully integrates with adjoining buildings and landscape. This is also reflected in Policy A3 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

- 7.19 This application seeks approval for the erection of a bungalow and associated works on land to the rear of Nos. 34 to 38 Ackerman Street, Eaton Socon. The site is located within the St Neots Conservation Area and is directly to the rear of the Grade II Listed Building of No. 36 Ackerman Street.
- 7.20 The proposed dwelling would be in an 'L' shape, of a hipped roof design and constructed using local facing brick walls and matching roof tiles to those used nearby. The proposed detached garage would be of a gable-end design and constructed of matching materials to the main dwellinghouse. The proposed dwelling would measure 14.8m by 15.5m with an eaves height of 2.49m and a ridge height of 4.41m.
- 7.21 In principle, a hipped roof design dwelling with a gable-end garage is considered to be acceptable, given the varied streetscene and surrounding area, which includes properties and associated buildings of both a gable-end and hipped roof designs. Furthermore, given the mixed finishing materials of properties in the locality, the Local Planning Authority consider that detailed finishing materials to the proposed dwelling could be secured via a suitably worded condition.
- 7.22 Numbers 32, 36 and 38 Ackerman Street are recorded on the 1880 Ordnance Survey map so are all historic buildings which pre-date 1880 and stand within the village of Eaton Socon not far from its historic centre near the Parish Church and village green. Number 38 is a historic public house, formerly The Millers Arms, approved for conversion into a dwellinghouse under 24/01165/FUL.
- 7.23 The St Neots Conservation Area Character Statement describes the streets around the old village green as a complex grain which preserves the rural character. The village centre preserves the elements of its origins as an ancient agricultural settlement which is typified by buildings of a suitable scale to their place in the village hierarchy. It states that such considerations should continue to inform future development decisions and that “further infilling should be resisted if the traditional grain of the historic settlement is to be preserved.”
- 7.24 The proposal site is an undeveloped area which was the beer garden of The Millers Arms, 38 Ackerman Street. Ordnance Survey maps of 1900 and 1924 show no buildings on the proposal

site and whilst the Agent has argued that the site has been developed over the years with numerous buildings associated with the public house and beer garden (outside bar, smoking shelter etc) these were predominantly to the rear of the public house along the eastern edge of the application site.

- 7.25 As an area of undeveloped open land, the application site contributes to the setting of the Listed Building at 36 Ackerman Street as an element which allows space around the Listed Building for it to be seen and also seen within the group of historic buildings. The application site is considered to provide a backdrop within which to experience the Listed Building in its historic setting without the intrusion of modern housing. The application site also provides a buffer which creates a physical separation between the historic group of buildings containing the Listed Building and the modern housing estate to the south and east.
- 7.26 The Conservation Officer has been consulted on the application and considers that the proposed introduction of a modern bungalow would not maintain the existing contribution which the application site makes to the setting of the Listed Building. In addition, the scale of the proposed bungalow is large in comparison to the scale of the Listed Building and the existing historic buildings, which lie directly north of the site. The proposed bungalow is also of a standard design which is not considered to be sympathetic to the location nor the relationship of the proposal site with the adjacent Listed Building, the group of historic buildings nor the character of the Conservation Area.
- 7.27 The existing modern housing of Simpkin Close to the south and east of the Listed Building and group of historic buildings on Ackerman Street is laid out in such a way as to respect the space between the modern housing and historic buildings, leaving an area of open ground to the south of the proposal site (in use as an area of single garages serving the modern housing). However, this proposal infills the space adjacent to the Listed Building and the group of historic buildings bringing modern development within a few metres of the buildings and removing the existing open space from the setting of the Listed Building.
- 7.28 The application is also not considered to sustain the significance of the Conservation Area because it proposes the infilling of the site, and this does not maintain the traditional grain of the historic settlement so is contrary to the advice within the Conservation Area Character Statement to resist such infilling. The proposed infilling of the open site is also in conflict with the character of the group of historic buildings as it brings a dwelling into the backlands of the buildings which does not maintain the existing ribbon development pattern of the existing historic buildings nor of the modern housing development.

- 7.29 For these reasons, the proposed development is considered harmful to the significance of the adjacent Listed Building and harmful to the significance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is not considered to preserve the Conservation Area's character or appearance as it does not maintain the historic grouping of buildings along Ackerman Street nor the grain, scale or character of the historic agricultural settlement. The Council's Conservation Officer has therefore concluded that the level of harm in this instance is less than substantial.

Residential Amenity

- 7.30 Policy LP14 of the Local Plan to 2036 states a proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of the proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings.
- 7.31 The neighbouring properties that are most likely to be impacted upon as a result of the proposed development are Nos 32, 34, 36 and 38 Ackerman Street and No. 54 Simpkin Close.
- 7.32 The proposed dwelling would be approximately 2.55m from the shared boundary (comprising a 1.8m high fence and proposed hedgerow planting) of No 32 Ackerman Street. The proposal will be single storey in height only and with the roof sloping away from the neighbouring property the Local Planning Authority consider there is adequate distance and screening to ensure the proposed dwelling does not result in any detrimental impacts on the rear garden of this neighbouring property.
- 7.33 With regard to 34 and 36, the proposed dwelling would measure a total depth of 15.5m and be approximately 1.9m and 1.5m respectively from the shared boundary which comprises an existing 1.8m high fence that would be retained as part of the proposal. The eaves height of the proposed dwelling would measure 2.49m in height and therefore would exceed that of the boundary fence by approximately 0.69m with the roof sloping away. Whilst No's 34 and 36 both have small outbuildings in the rear garden adjacent to the boundary, given the close proximity, the length and location of the proposed dwelling to the south of the small private rear amenity spaces of Nos. 34 and 36 Ackerman Street, the Local Planning Authority consider that the proposal would result in detrimental overbearing, overshadowing and loss of light impacts on the neighbouring properties amenities.
- 7.34 It is worth noting that whilst the proposed garage would be closer to the shared boundary, it would not result in harm to the neighbouring property of No. 36 Ackerman Street as the eaves height (1.68m) would be lower at the point of the shared boundary and would not exceed the height of the boundary fence.

- 7.35 The proposed detached garage would be approximately 0.6m from the shared boundary of the private rear amenity space of No. 38 Ackerman Street and would measure 6.5m in length, eaves heights of 1.68m and 2.44m and a ridge height of 3.96m. While it is recognised that the proposed garage would extend the length of the private rear amenity space of No. 38, given the off-centre gable with lower leaves height to the north with the boundary treatments to screen the majority of the proposal, the Local Planning Authority are satisfied that the proposed garage would not result in significantly detrimental impacts in this instance. Furthermore, the Local Planning Authority are satisfied that the proposed dwelling would be an appropriate distance from the shared boundary to No. 38 Ackerman Street.
- 7.36 The proposed dwelling would be approximately 1.5m to the shared boundary with No. 54 Simpkin Road – which comprises an existing 1.8m high fence to be retained, with the roof sloping away. While it is recognised that the proposed dwelling would result in some impacts on the neighbouring properties private rear amenity space, given the single storey scale, distance, the roof sloping away from the boundary, existing boundary treatments and being located north-west of the neighbouring property, any impacts are considered to be negligible.
- 7.37 It is also worth noting that given the single storey height and existing boundary treatments to be retained, the proposal would not result in any detrimental overlooking impacts on any other neighbouring properties amenities.
- 7.38 Furthermore, given the proposed development seeks approval for the erection of one dwelling in a predominantly residential area, and the previous use of the site as a pub beer garden, the proposal is not considered to result in any general noise or disturbance impacts on any neighbouring property.
- 7.39 In regard to amenity of the future occupiers, it is considered that property would include a suitably sized amenity space for future owners/occupiers.
- 7.40 Overall, taking the above factors into consideration and due to the scale and close proximity to the small private rear amenity spaces of Nos. 34 and 36 Ackerman Street, the Local Planning Authority consider that the proposal would result in unacceptable overbearing, overshadowing and loss of light impacts on the neighbouring properties amenities and therefore the proposal is contrary to Policy LP14 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) in this regard.

Highway Safety, access and Parking Provision

- 7.41 Policies LP16 and LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036 seeks to ensure that new development incorporates appropriate space for vehicle movements, facilitates access for emergency vehicles and service vehicles and incorporates adequate parking for vehicles and cycles.
- 7.42 The proposed dwelling would be accessed via an existing vehicular access point off Ackerman Street. Alongside access to the proposed dwelling, the development would include two off-street car parking spaces for No. 38 Ackerman Street. Cambridgeshire County Council as the Local Highways Authority have reviewed the proposals and advise that they have no objections to the proposed development subject to conditions. The existing access is therefore considered to be of an acceptable width and would provide appropriate vehicle and pedestrian visibility splays in both directions. A condition would be imposed on any planning permission granted to ensure the removal of the existing gate.
- 7.43 The proposed three-bedroom dwelling would include a detached garage for one off-street car parking space with hardsurfacing to the front of the garage for a second car parking space and a secure cycle store to the west of the garage. The proposed off-street car parking and cycle provision are considered to be acceptable and would be secured via a suitably worded condition. It is also worth noting that the proposal would also include two turning heads within the site to ensure that vehicles can enter the public highway in a forward gear.
- 7.44 As such, subject to appropriate conditions, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on highway safety and therefore accords with Policy LP17 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, Policies PT1 and PT2 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan and Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) in this regard.

Flood Risk and Surface Water

- 7.45 The site is at the lowest risk of flooding according to the Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2024 and Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning (Flood Zone 1) and the proposal is for minor development. Accordingly the sequential and exceptions tests for flooding nor the submission of a flood risk assessment are considered necessary in this instance in accordance with the NPPF and NPPG.
- 7.46 It is proposed to manage surface water from the proposed development through the use of soakaways with the disposal of foul sewage via the mains sewer. The proposed methods are considered to be acceptable in this instance, and officers are satisfied that full details of the surface and foul water drainage can

be secured as part of building regulations and other relevant legislative requirements in this instance.

- 7.47 As such, the proposal is considered to be acceptable with regard to its impact on both flood risk and surface water and therefore accords with Policies LP5, LP6 and LP15 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, Policy P4 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan, and Section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) in this regard.

Biodiversity

- 7.48 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF (2024) states planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Policy LP30 of the Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals to demonstrate that all potential adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity have been investigated and ensure no net loss in biodiversity and provide a net gain where possible, through the planned retention, enhancement and creation of habitats and wildlife features, appropriate to the scale, type, and location of development.
- 7.49 This application has been accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) which concludes that the site is of no significant ecological value and no evidence of protected and notable species were recorded. As such, further ecological assessment is concluded to be unnecessary. The Local Planning Authority are satisfied with the submitted PEA and a condition would be imposed on any planning permission granted to ensure development is carried out in accordance with the Precautionary Working Methods Statement detailed within the report.
- 7.50 As well as the above (and separate from the requirements of LP30) as of the 2nd April 2024 qualifying new development is subject to Biodiversity Net Gain legislation pursuant to the Environment Act 2021. This means that a 10% statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is required, following the hierarchy of onsite provision; mixture of on-site and off-site provision; and the last resort of statutory biodiversity credits unless it can be demonstrated that the development would be exempt.
- 7.51 The application has been accompanied by a Biodiversity Net Gain Report which concludes that the proposed development would result in a 53.86% net loss in habitat units and a 0.04 gain in hedgerow units. In order to achieve a 10% biodiversity net gain, 0.07 habitat units would be required. As this shortfall cannot be delivered on-site, off-site credits for habitats of the same distinctiveness or better within the same broad habitat category type will be required and will be secured via a suitably worded condition on any permission that may be granted

- 7.52 Overall, the Local Planning Authority are satisfied with the findings of the submitted PEA and BNG Assessment and as such the proposal accords with Local Plan Policy LP30 and the NPPF (2024) subject to the imposition of conditions.

Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings

- 7.53 Policy LP25 of the Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 states that proposal for new housing will be supported where they meet the optional Building regulation requirement M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' unless it can be demonstrated that site specific factors make this impractical or unviable.
- 7.54 To ensure that the development can meet these standards a condition would be imposed on any permission that may be granted in this regard in accordance with Policy LP25 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

Water Efficiency

- 7.55 Policy LP12 (j) of the Local Plan to 2036 states that new dwellings must comply with the optional Building Regulation requirement for water efficiency set out in Approved Document G of the Building Regulations. A condition will be attached to any consent to ensure compliance with the above, in accordance with Policy LP12 (j) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

Development Obligations

Bins

- 7.56 Part H of the Developer Contributions SPD (2011) requires a payment towards refuse bins for new residential development. A Unilateral Undertaking Form in respect of wheeled bins has been received by the Local Planning Authority dated 30 April 2025. The proposed development is therefore considered to accord with Policy LP4 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and the Developers Contributions SPD (2011).

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 7.57 The development will be CIL liable in accordance with the Council's adopted charging schedule; CIL payments will cover footpaths and access, health, community facilities, libraries and lifelong learning and education.

Conclusion

- 7.58 the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied for decision-taking in accordance with paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 8 of the NPPF in relation to applications involving the

provision of housing. This is generally referred to as 'the titled balance'. While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated the Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.

7.59 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

7.60 A revised NPPF was published in December 2024, introducing a substantially revised methodology for calculating local housing need and the reimposition of this as a mandatory approach for establishing housing requirements. This has resulted in the Council being unable to demonstrate a five year housing land supply (5YHLS). While no 5YHLS can be demonstrated the Local Plan policies concerned with the supply and location of housing as set out in the Development Strategy chapter (policies LP2, LP7, LP8, LP9 and LP10) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are considered to be out-of-date and can no longer be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.

7.61 As a result of this, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied for decision-taking in accordance with paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 8 of the NPPF in relation to applications involving the provision of housing. This is generally referred to as 'the titled balance'.

7.62 NPPF para 11 states:

'Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.'

For decision-taking this means:

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance (7) provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or*

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

7 Foot note 7 states: The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 194) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, a National Landscape, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.'*

- 7.63 As outlined in the report, there is a strong reason for refusal in relation to designated heritage assets. Therefore, there is a reason to not move forward to test d (ii) as per above and thus the 'titled balance' is disengaged.
- 7.64 Paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 7.65 Given the proposal seeks approval for the erection of one private residential dwelling, the Local Planning Authority do not consider that there would be any public benefits that would outweigh the identified harm in this instance.
- 7.66 By virtue of the scale, design and siting of the proposed dwelling, the proposed development is considered harmful to the significance of the adjacent Listed Building and harmful to the significance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is not considered to preserve the Conservation Area's character or appearance as it does not maintain the historic grouping of buildings along Ackerman Street nor the grain, scale or character of the historic agricultural settlement. Given the nature of the proposed development, any public benefits are considered to be negligible and would not outweigh the identified harm in this instance. The proposal is therefore deemed to be contrary to Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policies LP11, LP12 and LP34 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, Policy A3 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) in this regard and planning permission should be refused.
- 7.67 Furthermore, due to the scale and close proximity to the small private rear amenity spaces of Nos. 34 and 36 Ackerman Street, the Local Planning Authority consider that the proposal would result in unacceptable overbearing, overshadowing and loss of light impacts on the neighbouring properties amenities.

7.68 Taking national and local planning policies into account, and having regard for all relevant material considerations, it is concluded that the proposed development is contrary to policy and not acceptable. There are no overriding material considerations that indicate that permission should be granted in this instance. Therefore, it is recommended that the application be refused.

8. RECOMMENDATION - REFUSAL for the following reasons;

1. The site is an area of undeveloped open land to the rear of and associated with the Grade II Listed Building, 36 Ackerman Street and sits within the St Neots Conservation Area. As an area of open land, the application site contributes to the setting of the Listed Building at 36 Ackerman Street as an element which allows space around the Listed Building for it to be seen and also seen within the group of historic buildings. The application site also provides a buffer which creates a physical separation between the historic group of buildings containing the Listed Building and the modern housing estate to the south and east. By virtue of the scale, design and siting of the proposed dwelling, the proposed development is considered harmful to the significance of the adjacent Listed Building and harmful to the significance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is not considered to preserve the Conservation Area's character or appearance as it does not maintain the historic grouping of buildings along Ackerman Street nor the grain, scale or character of the historic agricultural settlement. Given the nature of the proposed development, any public benefits are considered to be negligible and would not outweigh the identified harm in this instance. As such, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policies LP11, LP12 and LP34 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, Policy A3 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, and Section 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).
2. The proposed development by virtue of the siting, scale and massing of the proposed dwelling, and close proximity to the small private rear amenity spaces of Nos. 34 and 36 Ackerman Street, would result in overbearing, overshadowing and loss of light impacts to the detriment of the residential amenity of occupiers of No.'s 34 and 36 Ackerman Street. The proposal is therefore considered contrary to Policy LP14 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036, the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

If you would like a translation of this document, a large text version or an audio version, please contact us on 01480 388388 and we will try to accommodate your needs.

CONTACT OFFICER:

Enquires about this report to **Lewis Tomlinson, Principle Planning Improvement Support Officer**

lewis.tomlinson@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Schedule of Planning Applications – 13th May 2025

No.	Reference	Development	SNTC Decision	Notes
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The following application/s are in a conservation area

S3	25/00756/FUL	AWJ Usher & Sons Ltd Land Rear Of 34 To 38 Ackerman Street Eaton Socon Erection of three-bedroom bungalow with garage & associated works (inc new planting and creation of off-street parking & turning to both existing and proposed properties)	SUPPORT RS Abstained	Makes efficient use of its site. Satisfactory proposal in terms of scale and pattern of development.
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Chairperson

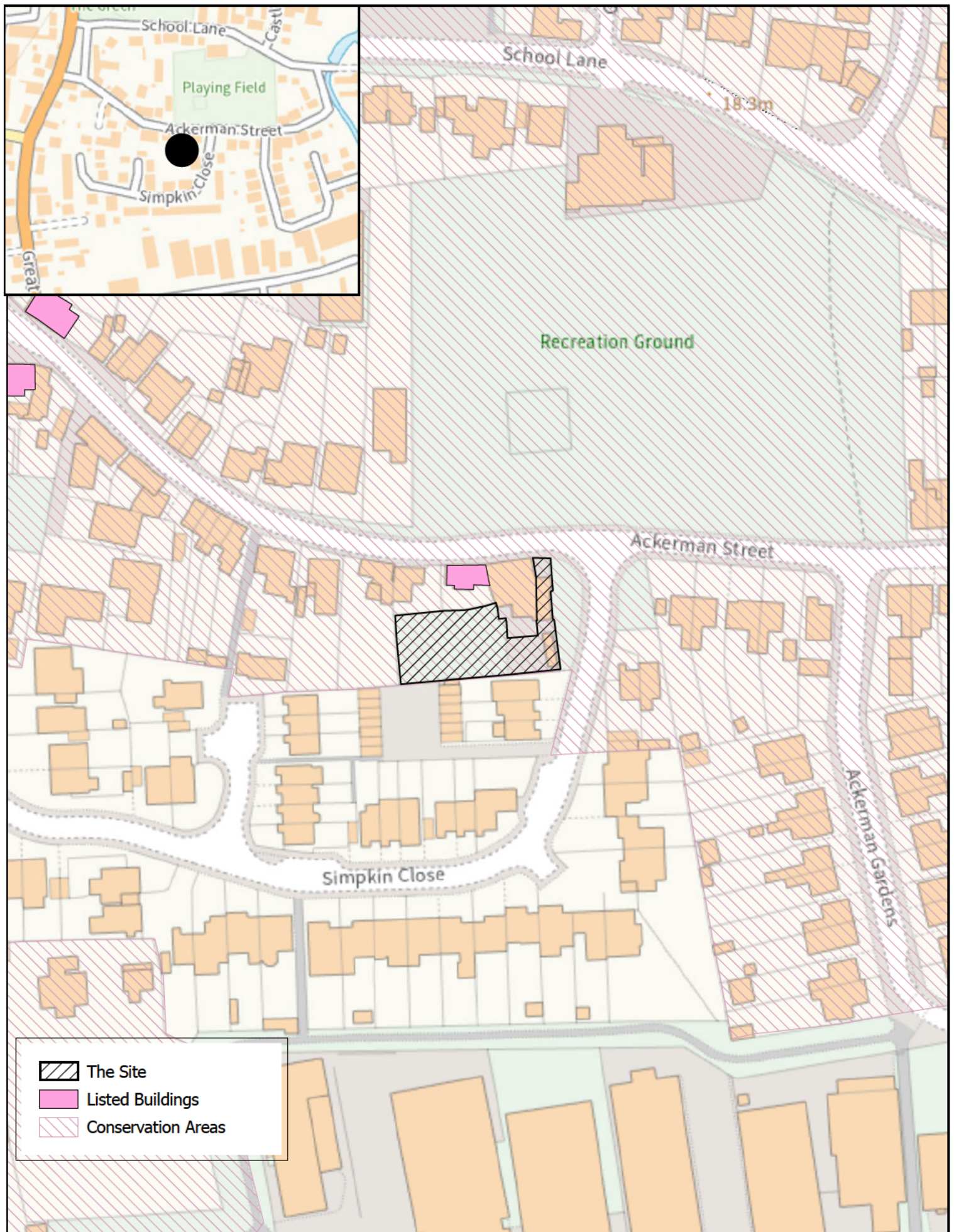
Development Management Committee

Application Ref: 25/00756/FUL



Scale = 1:1,250

Date Created: 05/08/2025

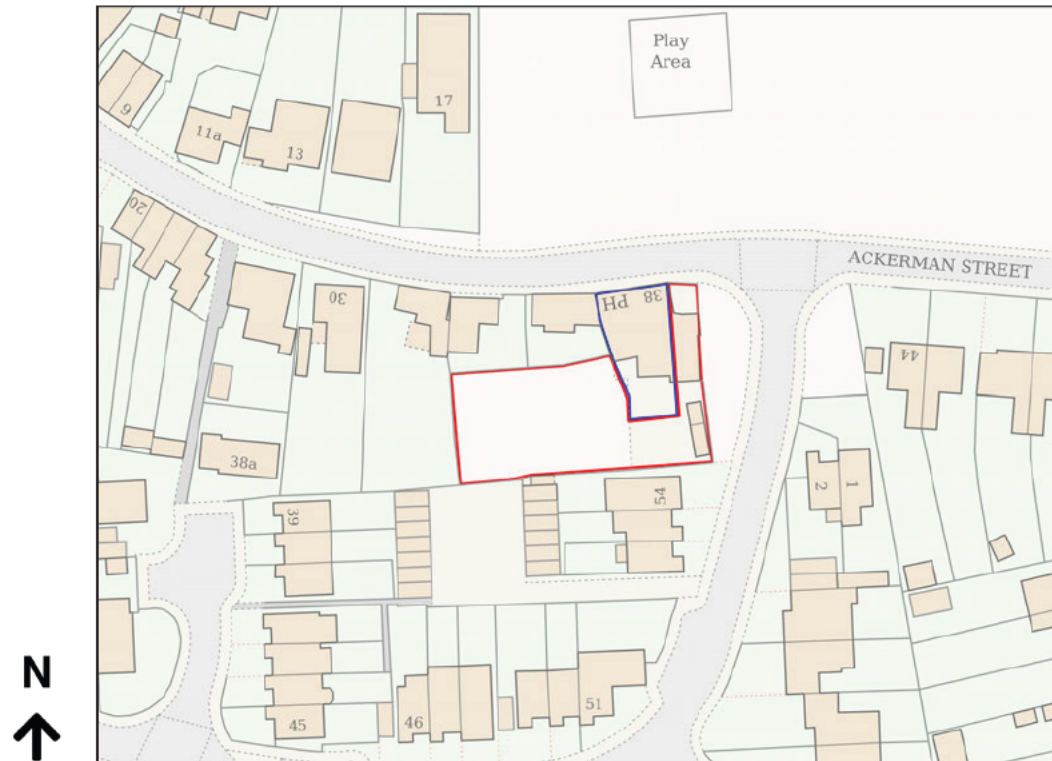


Location Plan

Site Address: 38, Ackerman Street, Eaton Socon, PE19 8HR

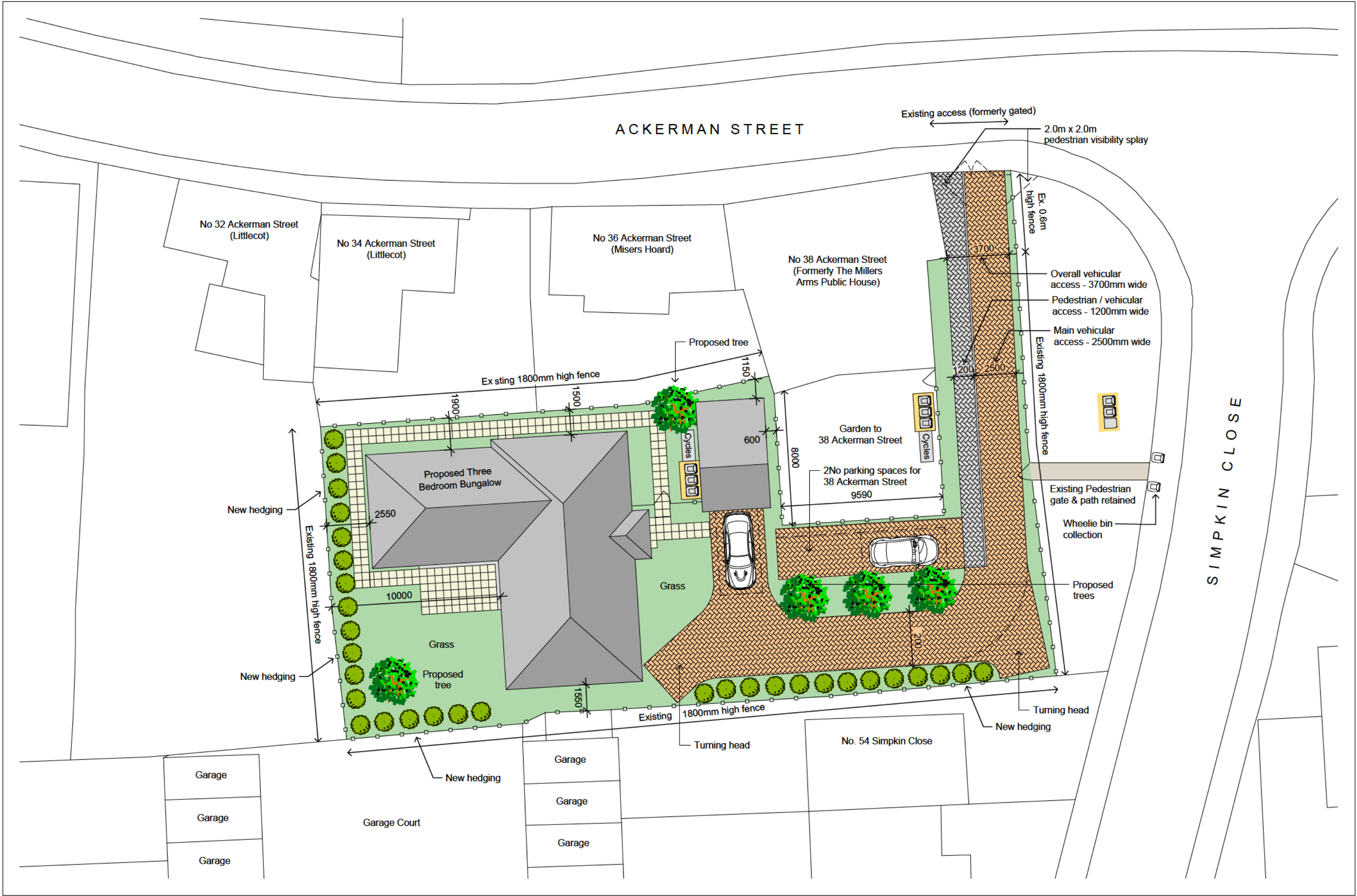
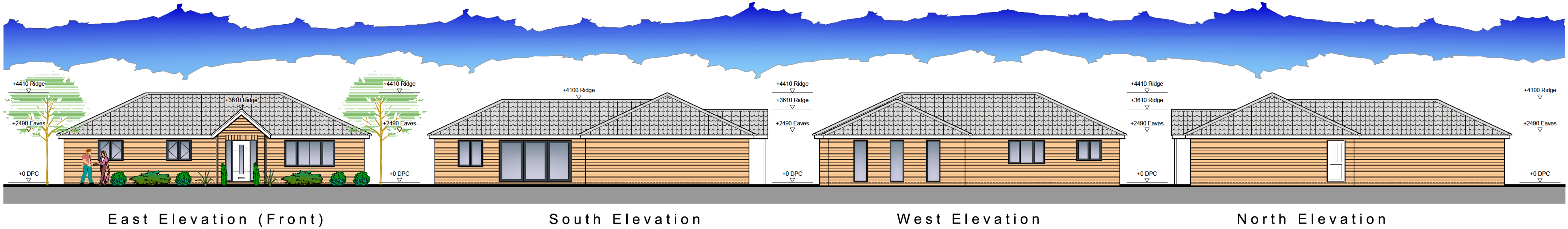
Date Produced: 24-Apr-2025

Scale: 1:1250 @A4



Planning Portal Reference: PP-13965613v1

0 50
Metres



Site Layout
1:200



Floor Plan



8 Tennyson Place
Eaton Ford
St. Neots
Cambridgeshire
PE19 7LL
Tel / Fax: 01480 218440
Email: john@jlgdesign.co.uk

Project:
Proposed Bungalow rear of
38 Ackerman Street, Eaton
Socon, St Neots. PE19 8HR.

Drawing:
Plans and Elevations

Drawn by:
JG

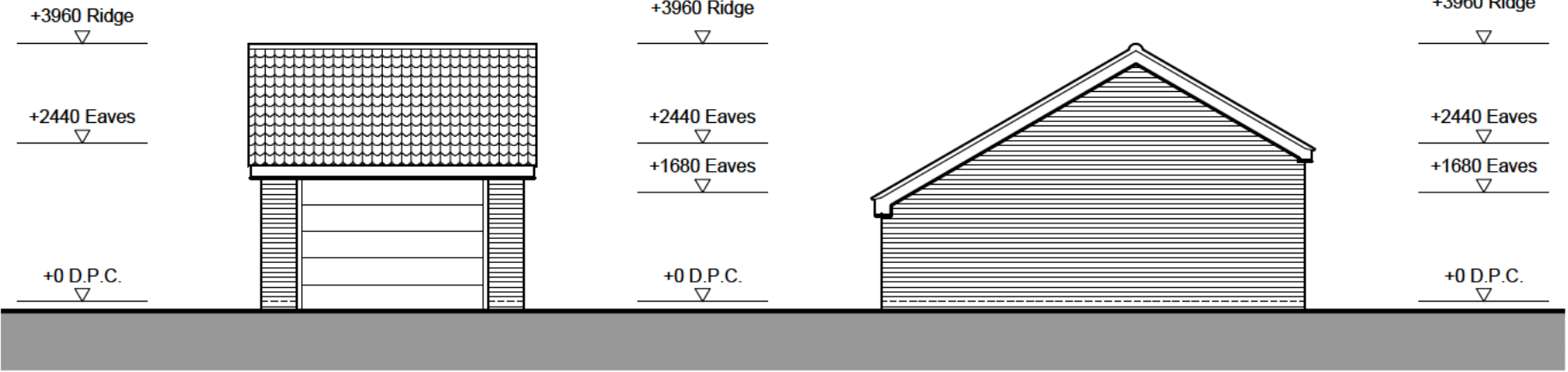
Scale:
1:100;1:200

Date:
4.3.25

This drawing should not be scaled other than for planning
purposes. All dimensions to be checked on site.

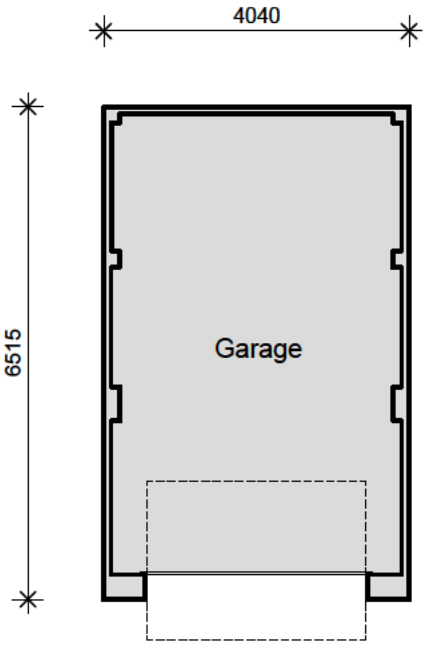
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JLG1002/NB/01

Revision

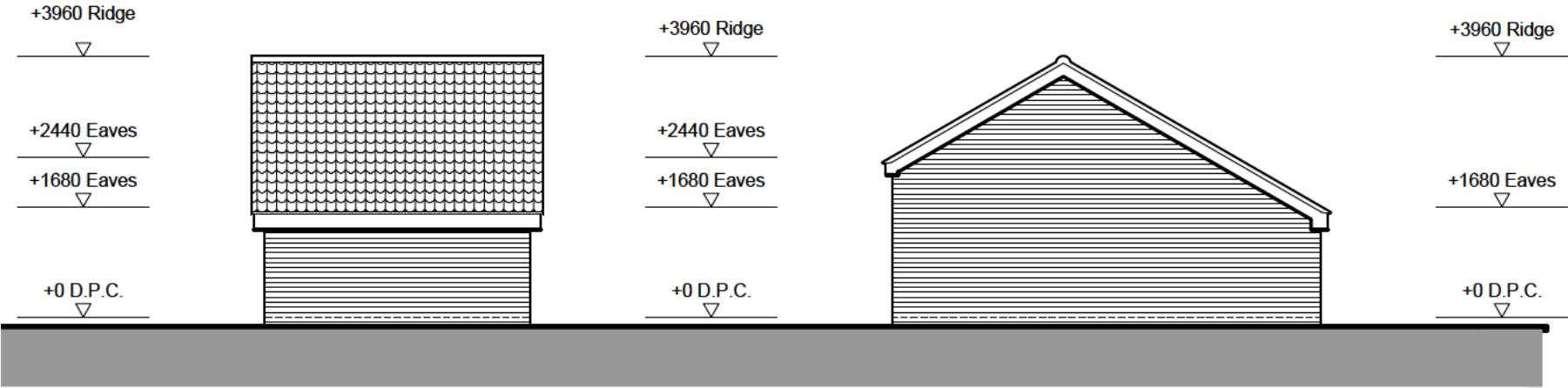


Front Elevation

Side Elevation



Plan



Rear Elevation

Side Elevation



8 Tennyson Place
Eaton Ford
St. Neots
Cambridgeshire
PE19 7LL
Tel / Fax: 01480 218440
Email: john@jlgdesign.co.uk

Project:
Proposed Bungalow rear of
38 Ackerman Street, Eaton
Socon, St Neots. PE19 8HR.

Drawing:
Single Garage

Drawn by:
JG

Scale:
1:100

Date:
8.3.25

This drawing should not be scaled other than for planning
purposes. All dimensions to be checked on site.

Drawing no:
JLG1002/NB/02

Revision