

Planning and Development

Email: Planning.help@ashford.gov.uk



Direct Line: [REDACTED]

Our Ref: PRE/2025/0045

Date: 20, May 2025



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Location: The Cottage On The Green, Church Road, Warehorne, Ashford, TN26 2LL
Proposal: Construction of detached home bakery on plot of land next door but one to applicant's house.

I write further to your request for the pre-application advice in connection with the proposed development at the above address.

The application site comprises a parcel of land which is located to the north of Church Road within the village of Warehorne. The site lies within Warehorne Conservation Area adjacent to The Woolpack, a Grade II listed public house and Pilgrim Cottage, a Grade II listed dwelling. Opposite the site lies the Church of St Matthew, a Grade I listed building.

The site is currently occupied by a flat-roofed garage and a greenhouse and is used as an allotment serving the applicant's property, The Cottage on the Green.

The submitted proposal proposes to demolish the garage and replace it with purpose-built home bakery for use by the applicant who seeks to use the new building to produce sweet and savoury baked goods for the gluten-free market which will be delivered to customers. There will be no on-site sales.

Principle of Development

Development Plan Policies SP1 and SP3 support and promote rural employment opportunities in sustainable locations across the Borough in accordance with policies EMP3, EMP4 and EMP5. This approach is consistent with the NPPF to the extent that the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas is encourage provided, the location is appropriate.

The application site is in the countryside. Policy EMP5 states that new employment premises in the countryside will not be permitted unless the following criteria can be met

- It is essential to be located in the countryside;
- The development can be integrated sensitively into its context respecting the character of any important existing buildings, the landscape setting and sites of biodiversity value;

- There would be no significant impact on the amenities of any neighbouring residential occupiers; and,
- It can be demonstrated that the development will not generate a type or amount of traffic that would be inappropriate to the rural road network that serves it.

Reading the submitted proposal it has not been demonstrated that the above criteria has been sufficiently met and, that the proposal would comply with policy EMP5. However, notwithstanding the requirements of policy EMP5 it is material to consider there is a requirement within the NPPF that planning decisions recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. (para 88, NPPF).

In these circumstances it is important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

With the above in mind, considering the proposed use and scale of the development proposed and its relatively sustainable location on a previously developed site within the village of Warehorne, subject to the proposed materials and landscaping, it is my Officer level opinion that the proposal could be supported in principle.

Landscape Character and Visual Impact

It is a requirement under policies SP6 and ENV3a that all development proposals are of high-quality design and demonstrate particular regard for the characteristics of the landscape in which it is located. Attention must be paid, amongst other things, to the presence and pattern of historic landscape features, the setting of vernacular buildings and guidance given with the landscape character SPD. This approach is consistent with the NPPF which seeks development which adds to the overall quality of the area as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.

The proposal seeks to construct a single storey building clad with feather edged weatherboarding (unpainted) and roofed with plain clay tiles and hogs back ridge tiles. Considering the proposed plans, it is my Officer level opinion that the proposal scheme would deliver a development which is of acceptable proportions and balanced in form. Set back from the edge of the road the proposed building would sit sympathetically within the wider landscape and would complement the architectural and historical character of the adjacent listed buildings, referencing the materials used, footprint, orientation, and general form. No adverse visual impact would be likely to be caused. The materials proposed are acceptable given the context of the site, and the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape would be preserved. Policies SP1, SP6 and ENV3a of the Development would be sufficiently met.

Heritage

Reading the proposal together with The Woolpack and Pilgrim Cottage, the proposal has the potential to cause harm and impact detrimentally on the setting of the listed buildings. Accordingly, any application you choose to submit will need to be accompanied by detailed Heritage Statement assessing the potential impacts.

This should also include a desk-based analysis of the potential for archaeology. The site lies opposite St Matthews Church which lies within an area of known archaeology and

archaeological potential. Further advice on this can be found at <https://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/history-and-heritage/historic-environment-record>.

Trees & Landscaping

It would appear the site lies adjacent to several mature trees. To fully assess the impact of the development on the trees, a Tree Survey of the site along with an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and an Arboricultural Method Statement should be submitted. Based on the plans submitted to the site I have concerns about the impact of the proposed building on the trees on the western boundary. Subject to the Tree Survey and AIA it may be that no dig foundations are required to mitigate the impact upon the trees.

Ecology & BNG

Under policy ENV1 and paragraph 193 of the NPPF there is a duty to conserve or enhance biodiversity and opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of the design.

There is scope for biodiversity enhancements to be integrated into the proposal and accordingly any application you choose to submit should be accompanied by an ecological enhancement plan demonstrating ecological enhancements that are commensurate with the development proposed.

A minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain will also need to be demonstrated. Further advice on this can be found on our website using the following link <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/planning-and-development/biodiversity-net-gain-bng/>

Parking and Highway Safety

Advice from KCC Highways should be sought before the submission regarding the intensification of the use of the access. Given the size of the unit proposed ample parking in line with the Council's Parking Standards SPD and policy TRA3b is proposed to be provided.

You will appreciate that this advice is given at officer level only and is not legally binding on the Council. Should you decide to submit a planning application, additional issues may arise during the advertisement and public consultation period requiring further consideration of the matters. Further pre-application advice will command an additional fee.

Conclusion

In conclusion given the above and upon consideration of the potential impacts it is my informal view that in the event of an application being submitted this proposal could potentially be supported.

Should you decide to submit a formal application please note that your submission will need to include the following:

- Full planning application form (with the correct notice served on all relevant parties who own/have an interest in the land within the red line
- Full set of drawings including section drawings
- Design and Access Statement
- Heritage Statement/Archaeology Assessment

- Preliminary Ecological Assessment and other ecological surveys as deemed necessary, pending the outcome of the PEA, along with details of proposed mitigation measures and ecological enhancements which should also take into account any proposed lighting in relation to biodiversity
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)
- Tree survey and/or associated Arboricultural Impact Assessment

Should it be evident that other surveys are required we will of course inform you of this at the earliest possible time.

I hope this is of assistance and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me

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I trust that this advice is of assistance.

Yours Sincerely
Laura Payne

You will appreciate that this advice is given at officer level only and is not legally binding on the Council. Should you decide to submit a planning application, additional issues may arise during the advertisement and public consultation period requiring further consideration of the matters. Further pre-application advice will command an additional fee.

I trust that this advice is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



Notes for your information:

1. When you make an application please ensure that it meets the requirements of the council's validation advice note and that a validation checklist appropriate for the type of application is completed and submitted with it.
2. The advice note and relevant checklist can be accessed via the "Applying for planning permission" pages of the council's website (www.ashford.gov.uk) on the "Is in my application valid" page.
3. The advice given by Council Officers for pre-application enquiries does not constitute a formal response or decision of the Council with regards to any future planning application. Any views or opinions are given in good faith, and to the best of ability, without prejudice to the formal consideration of any planning application.
4. The final decision on any application can only be taken after the Council has consulted local people, statutory consultees and any other interested parties.
5. A final decision on an application will be made by senior officers or by the council's Planning Committee and will be based on all the information available at that time.
6. This advice will be carefully considered in reaching a decision or recommendation on any resulting applications; subject to the proviso that the circumstances and information may

change or come to light that could alter the position. It should be noted that the weight given to pre-application advice will decline over time.

7. It should be noted that if the planning application is delayed for a significant period then any pre-application advice may be overtaken by changes in national, regional or local policy and guidance