OFFICER REPORT

Case No: 25/00290/FUL Full Planning Application

Proposal: Erection of a single self-build dwelling with garage, parking and amenity land.

Location: Land At 19 Bury Road Ramsey

Applicant: Mr Jason Oswald

Grid Ref: 528274 284466

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The application site is located to the rear of No. 19 Bury Road, Ramsey. No.19 is a detached two storey dwelling set back from the highway and benefits from a spacious plot. The application site measures approximately 0.23 hectares and is rectangular in shape. It includes the proposed access road, which is set back from the public highway and located behind No. 19 Bury Road. The site is bound by hedging, mature trees and acoustic fencing. The area is characterised with detached dwellings set back from the highway in large plots, with a loose linear arrangement.

The application site is within the Ramsey Conservation Area and therefore trees within and adjacent to the application site are afforded with protection. The site is located in Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning and therefore at lowest risk from river and sea flooding. The Councils Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2024 identifies the site is not susceptible to ground or surface water flooding.

The application seeks to subdivide the rear garden of No.19 Bury Road, construct a detached 1.5 storey dwelling with attached double garage and form a new vehicle access from Bury Road to serve the proposed dwelling. It is a material planning consideration that planning permission has previously been granted for a dwelling on the site (ref 19/01127/FUL and 22/02393/FUL). In this case, the application seeks to attach the garage to the dwelling, replace dormer windows with skylights and increase the proportions of the dwelling in height (approximately 1m), width and length.

Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (12th December 2024) (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 10).'

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.

For full details visit the government website: https://www.gov.uk

PLANNING POLICIES

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 - adopted May 2019
*LP1: Amount of Development
*LP2: Strategy for Development
*LP4: Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery
*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
*LP25: Housing Mix
*LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
*LP31: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows
*LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Guidance:
*Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD (2017)
*Huntingdonshire Townscape and Landscape Assessment SPD (2022)
*Developer Contributions SPD (2011)
*Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2017)
*Annual Monitoring Report, regarding housing land supply.

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

PLANNING HISTORY
22/02393/FUL- Proposed detached dwelling with double garage and new access- Permitted 09.03.2023

19/01127/FUL - Proposed detached dwelling with three car garage, access and ancillary works - Permitted 27.03.2020

CONSULTATIONS
Ramsey Town Council - No comment at the time of determination.

CCC Highways -No Objection. It is noted that the proposal seek to widen the access by approx. 1.5m making it approx. 7m wide, which is acceptable for a shared access and the appropriate vehicle and pedestrian visibility splays have been shown on Drawing 22442_03 B. The vehicular crossing within the footway is of a sufficient width to serve the shared access without being widened. The effect of the proposed development upon the Public Highway would be mitigated through the recommended conditions, should the development be permitted.

HDC Conservation Team - No comment. Given the previous permission the Conservation Officer raises no comment on this application.

HDC Arboricultural Officer - Objection recommends refusal. The Arboricultural Officer has raised concerns regarding both the works already undertaken and the submitted proposal. These concerns are summarised as follows:

- Works within Root Protection Area (RPA): Services have been trenched through the RPA of Tree T3, a Lime tree located at the front/access point of the site.
- Encroachment by Built Structures: Fencing and concrete footings have already been installed within the RPA of Tree T3.
- Proposed Development Impact: The submitted proposal results in further encroachment into the RPAs and canopy spreads of Trees T18 and T28.

Further discussion regarding the impact of the proposal on protected trees is provided in a subsequent section of this report.

REPRESENTATIONS
No representations received at time of determination.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES
The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:

- Principle of development
- Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on the Conservation Area
- Residential Amenity
- Highway Safety, Parking Provision and Access
- Biodiversity
- Trees
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings
- Water Efficiency
- Other matters

*Principle of development
The site is physically, functionally and visually related to existing buildings and as such is located within the built-up area of Ramsey. Ramsey is defined as a Spatial Planning Area in Policy LP7 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.

Local Plan Policy LP7 supports proposals for residential development where it is appropriately located within the built-up area.

Another material planning consideration in the determination of this application is the fact that planning permission has previously been granted for a dwelling on the site under references 19/01127/FUL and 22/02393/FUL. As such, the principle of residential development in this location, despite its backland nature, has already been established and is considered acceptable.

The principle of erecting one dwelling on the site in the built-up area is therefore supported and would be in accordance with Policies LP2 and LP7 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036, subject to other material planning considerations outlined below.

*Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on the Conservation Area
Policies LP11 and LP12 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 state that developments should respond positively to their context, draw inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings and contribute positively to the area's character and identity.

As outlined in previous Officer reports, residential development on this site would constitute backland development. However, the principle of residential development in this location has already been established as acceptable through the granting of planning permissions 22/02393/FUL and 19/01127/FUL.

Officer assessments supporting these permissions noted that backland development is already present immediately to the south of the application site. Additionally, the character of the area is defined by detached dwellings arranged informally within generous plots, with no consistent design, age, or scale across the street scene. As such, it was concluded during both applications that the proposed development would not appear out of character with its surroundings.

The key differences between the previously approved scheme and the dwelling now proposed relate to the siting, form, and scale of the building, as well as the positioning of the garage. These changes are summarised as follows:

- The dwelling now features a cross-shaped footprint, replacing the previously approved traditional rectangular form with a subservient extension.
- The garage has been repositioned and is now attached to the eastern end of the dwelling.
- The proposed dwelling reaches a maximum ridge height of 7.65m, compared to 6.75m in the approved scheme.
- The footprint of the proposed dwelling is approximately 260m², an increase from the 181m² of the previously permitted dwelling.
- The dwelling is sited further south within the plot, increasing separation from No. 10 Biggin Lane but reducing the distance to the shared boundary with No. 23 Bury Road.
- The design of the proposed dwelling is more contemporary in character than that of the previously approved scheme.

It is acknowledged that the proposed dwelling is larger in scale and positioned closer to the boundary with No. 23 Bury Road. However, it would still occupy a spacious plot, with submitted plans indicating that only 11% of the site would be developed. Additionally, the cross-shaped footprint helps reduce the extent of hard surfacing and allows for the provision of a residential garden to the west, while retaining garden space to the north. The proximity of the proposed dwelling to the common boundary to the south is discussed in the residential amenity impacts section of this report.

It is acknowledged that the proposed dwelling adopts a more contemporary design than the previously approved scheme. However, as outlined above, development in the locality is varied in character, with no consistent architectural style. The proposed dwelling would be set back from the road frontage and screened from public view by No. 19, as well as by acoustic fencing and access gates. As such, the contemporary design is not considered to be out of keeping with the surrounding context.

As previously noted, the application site lies within the Ramsey Conservation Area. The Conservation Team has not provided any comments on this application, given that residential built development on the site has already been granted planning permission.

In terms of materials, the proposal includes buff-facing brick, stone/pebble grey aluminium, timber casement windows and doors, off-white render, oak posts, dark zinc/steel cladding, dark-stained timber cladding, grey slate tiles and steel rainwater goods. Several of these materials contribute to the dwelling's contemporary appearance. While buff and red brick are commonly used within the locality, the area does not exhibit a consistent architectural character. Given the dwelling's set-back position from the road frontage and its screening by No. 19 Bury Road, officers raise no objections to the proposed palette of materials.

A combined timber log and bin store is proposed, with the bin store element designed to be covered and to effectively screen residential wheeled bins. This arrangement is considered acceptable.

It is recommended that conditions be imposed requiring the submission of details relating to both hard and soft landscaping, to ensure the proposal is appropriately assimilated into its surroundings.

Overall, the proposal is considered to accord with Policies LP11 and LP12 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 and aligns with the design principles set out in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD (2017). Furthermore, the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the Ramsey Conservation Area, in accordance with Policy LP34 of the Local Plan.

*Residential Amenity

Policy LP14 states a proposal will be supported where a high standard of amenity is provided for all users and occupiers of a proposed development and maintained for users and occupiers of neighbouring land and buildings.

The closest residential dwellings to the application site are No. 23 Bury Rd, No.10 Biggin Lane and No.8 the Maltings. Due regard shall be paid to the residential amenity impacts of the proposal on the occupants of these adjacent properties.

At its closest point the proposed dwelling would be 10 metres from the shared boundary with No.10 Biggin Lane. No. 10 benefits from a long garden, with the dwelling itself approximately 85 metres from the rear boundary with the application site. The separation distance between the common boundary has been increased by an additional 3m in comparison to the permitted scheme.

At its closest point, the proposed dwelling would face No. 88 The Maltings. Compared to the previously permitted scheme, the current proposal is positioned further south within the plot. As a result, a single first-floor window on the western elevation would face towards the rear amenity space of No. 88. This window serves a habitable bedroom; however, the room also benefits from four skylights.

The window is recessed beneath the roof of the covered patio area by approximately 3 metres. Due to this overhang, the window would be significantly overshadowed for much of the day, and the canopy itself would help screen oblique views into the neighbouring garden. Additionally, the window is set back approximately 12 metres from the shared boundary.

Obscuring this window could adversely affect the residential amenity of future occupants of the proposed dwelling, given that it serves a habitable room. Officers are satisfied that the combination of the 12-metre setback from the shared boundary and the substantial roof overhang would sufficiently mitigate any significant overlooking or privacy concerns.

It is also noted that the occupants of No. 88 The Maltings were given the opportunity to comment on the application and have not submitted any representations or raised concerns during the course of the consultation.

A subservient extension is proposed on the western elevation of the dwelling to form a covered patio area, with a ridge height of 6.3 metres. A detached garage, already permitted, would have a ridge height of 4.6 metres and be located approximately 3.1 metres from the shared boundary with No. 88. Although the ridge height of the proposed extension would be 1.7 metres taller than that of the approved garage, it would be positioned 8.8 metres from the common boundary at its closest point. Officers consider that this separation distance sufficiently mitigates any potential overbearing impact arising from the increased height and, as such, is not considered to result in unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity.

As detailed above, the proposed dwelling is positioned further south within the site to avoid impacts on the root protection areas of existing trees. At its closest point, the dwelling would be located approximately 2 metres from the shared boundary with No. 23 Bury Road. It is noted that a car port, permitted under application reference 1300101FUL, is situated along the southern boundary of No. 23 and intervenes between the proposed dwelling and the neighbouring property. The front elevation of No. 23 Bury Road is set back 18.4 metres from the northern boundary, resulting in a total separation distance of 20.4 metres between No. 23's principal elevation and the southern elevation of the proposed dwelling. This separation is considered sufficient to mitigate any significant overbearing, overshadowing, or loss of light impacts.

The proposed access would be located to the south of No. 19 Bury Road, approximately 6.9 metres from the property at its closest point. Under both the previous and current applications, a number of mitigation measures have been proposed to address potential impacts on No. 19. These include the installation of a 2-metre-high acoustic fence, hedge planting on either side to provide additional

buffering, and the use of a noise-reducing surface for the driveway. While the driveway would still pass relatively close to No. 19, taking into account the proposed mitigation, the level of vehicle movements associated with a single dwelling is not considered to result in significant noise or disturbance. As such, officers do not raise concerns in this regard.

Overall, it is considered that the development would provide a high standard of amenity for future occupants while maintaining acceptable levels of amenity for neighbouring properties. The proposal is deemed acceptable in terms of overshadowing, overlooking, overbearing impact, loss of privacy, and loss of light. Subject to the imposition of the obscure glazing condition as outlined above, the development is not expected to result in any significant adverse impact on residential amenity. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy LP14 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.

*Highway Safety, Parking Provision and Access
Policy 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.

The proposal seeks to widen the existing gated access which services No. 23 Bury Rd to form a shared access off the public highway. Cambridgeshire County Council have been consulted on the application as the Local Highways Authority. The Highways Officer considered the proposal to widen the access appropriate for shared use and notes the access can achieve the appropriate vehicle and pedestrian visibility splays. The Officer considered any impacts on the public highway can be mitigated through the recommended conditions, should the development be permitted.

Officers also consider the parking and rotating space adequate for turning and parking within the site.

The submitted floor plan indicates that four cycles can be stored within the garage. Officers are therefore satisfied that the development accords with Policy LP17 of the Local Plan to 2036 and the Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2017), which seek the provision of secure and covered cycle parking on the basis of 1 space per bedroom.

Subject to conditions, it is considered that the proposal accords with Policy LP17 of the Local Plan.

*Biodiversity
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.

The application is accompanied with a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal dated 26th November 2024. Given the application site primarily comprises a domestic garden with boundary trees and hedges, the submitted PEA recorded no presence of protected species on the site and habitats on the site are of limited value. The PEA concludes no impacts to any notable habitats are anticipated due to the small-scale nature of the proposed development. The PEA recommends mitigation measures during construction to reduce biodiversity impacts and habitat enhancement measures. These measures can be secured by condition should planning permission be granted.

In regard to mandatory biodiversity net gain, as of the 2nd of April 2024 a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) was imposed on small sites. This application was validated on the 2nd April 2024, whereby the submission of a standard biodiversity matrix was compulsory. A BNG Exemption Letter accompanies the application which states the application falls within the self-build exemption. The submitted application form confirms the applicants have had the primary input into the final design and layout of a house and would occupy the proposed dwelling themselves for a minimum of 3 years. Officers are satisfied the proposal is exempt from a mandatory net gain as the development is self-

build. As it is on this basis only that 10% BNG is not to be secured, a condition shall be imposed on any consent to ensure the property is a self-build property.

*Trees

Policy LP31 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals to demonstrate that the potential for adverse impacts on trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows has been investigated and that a proposal will only be supported where it seeks to conserve and enhance any existing tree, woodland, hedge or hedgerow of value that would be affected by the proposed development. As the application site is located within Ramsey Conservation Area, trees with a trunk diameter of 75mm or over and within the designated area are afforded with protection. It is however noted that none of the trees within the site are subject to a specific Tree Preservation Order.

The Councils Arboricultural Officer has been consulted as part of the application and during the course of the application amended site layout plans, Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA), Arboricultural Method Statement and tree protection plan have been submitted and the Arboricultural Officer has been reconsulted accordingly.

During the course of the application the Arboricultural Officer raised concerns regarding the siting of the dwelling underneath the canopy and root protection areas (RPA's) of the protected trees within the northeastern corner of the site. Subsequently, amended plans were submitted whereby the dwelling and associated garage were sited further south within the site to avoid significant encroachment into the RPAs of the trees.

The application is accompanied with an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and tree constraints plan. The submitted information notes that two trees T9 (Juniper) and T10 (Maple) are proposed for removal to facilitate the access proposed. The report concludes these trees are of poor condition and have a short life expectancy. It is also noted that sections of the proposed driveway and patio would impinge on the root protection area of adjacent trees (T3, T4, T5, T10, T18 and T28).

The amended layout has been reviewed by the Arboricultural (Arb) Officer. In the latest round of comments (October 2025), the Arboricultural Officer raised an objection to the proposal and recommended refusal due to works already undertaken within root protection areas and proposed encroachment into the RPAs with the submitted proposal.

The Arboricultural Officer has raised concerns regarding trenching works for services that have occurred within the RPAs of Tree T3, a Lime tree located at the front/access point of the site.

It should be noted that whilst the submission of a Tree Protection Plan (TPP) and Arboricultural Method Statement was conditioned under application 22/02393/FUL, these documents have not yet been submitted as part of a discharge of condition application. Furthermore, the location of utility services was not identified during the original application, and no condition was imposed to secure this level of detail.

The purpose of requiring a TPP and Method Statement was to ensure appropriate tree protection through planning controls. However, it is important to acknowledge that Statutory Undertakers, such as utility providers, hold legal rights under statutory powers to install, maintain, and repair apparatus without requiring the same permissions as private individuals or developers.

While the Local Planning Authority has sought to implement protective measures through planning conditions, unfortunately, the trenching works within the RPA of T3 have already been carried out outside the scope of planning control and legislation.

The submitted AIA also recommended the utility trench be located to the extreme south side of the drive edge by hand-digging to avoiding the severance of any roots. The submitted tree protection plan indicates this would be the case, albeit the trenching through T3's RPA has regrettably already been completed.

In the latest comments (October 2025), the Arb Officer also raised concerns that fencing and concrete footings have already been installed within the RPA of Tree T3. It is acknowledged that this is not an ideal situation for the health of the tree; however, the location of and method of constructing the acoustic fencing was previously approved under planning permissions 22/02393/FUL and 19/01127/FUL. Given this established fallback position, the siting of the fence is considered acceptable.

The Arb Officer has raised concerns that the submitted proposal results in further encroachment into the RPAs and canopy spreads of Trees T18 and T28.

A specific concern was noted regarding the proposed installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on the garage roof, which lies in close proximity to the canopy of Tree T18. The officer highlights the potential for future pressure to prune the tree to reduce shading or accommodate the panels.

However, it is important to clarify that the installation of solar PV panels does not require planning permission under Class A, Part 14 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, provided the conditions set out in paragraph A.1 are met. Additionally, the site already benefits from planning permission for the erection of a dwelling in proximity to the canopies and RPAs of these protected trees. It should also be noted that any pruning of protected trees would require prior notification to the Local Planning Authority, with a minimum notice period of six weeks before undertaking such works.

The key consideration in this instance is whether the proposed garage and associated hard surfacing are sited sufficiently far enough from the protected trees. The submitted AIA identifies a 12% encroachment into the RPA of T18 and 15% into T28's RPA. Following amendments to the siting of the dwelling, the impact on T18 has likely been reduced, while the encroachment on T28 has slightly increased.

On balance, the level of encroachment is considered minor and acceptable, remaining below the 20% threshold set out in British Standard BS 5837:2012 - Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction recommendations.

The application is supported by a TPP, Arboricultural Method Statement, and cross-sectional drawings detailing the proposed driveway construction.

While the Arboricultural Officer has expressed reservations regarding the level of encroachment into the RPAs of Trees T3 and T5, they have reviewed the submitted documentation and consider the proposed construction method for the driveway to be acceptable, provided it is implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Whilst regrettably some works have already taken place within the RPAs of protected trees, the future construction approach and tree protection measures appear to follow best practice principles for working within RPAs, including techniques designed to minimise root disturbance and protect tree health, consistent with the recommendations set out in BS 5837:2012 - Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Should the development be permitted, a compliance condition shall be imposed to ensure the development is built out in accordance with the submitted tree protection details.

With the suggested conditions in place, it is considered that the proposal would accord with Policies LP30 and LP31 of the Local Plan to 2036.

*Flood Risk and Drainage
National guidance and Policy LP5 of the Local Plan seek to steer new development to areas at lowest risk of flooding and advises this should be done through application of the Sequential Test, and if appropriate the Exceptions Test (as set out in paragraphs 172-179 of the NPPF (2024)).

As detailed above, according to the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning and the Council's 2024 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), the site lies within Flood Zone 1. The SFRA also identifies the site is not at risk from surface or ground water flooding.

Paragraph 175 of the NPPF (2024) states the sequential test should be used in areas known to be at risk now or in the future from any form of flooding, except in situations where a site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates that no built development within the site boundary, including access or escape routes.

Given the site is located within Flood Zone 1, less than 1 hectare and at negligible risk to surface and ground water flooding, it is considered a flood risk assessment and sequential test is not required for this proposal.

Given the proposed development is minor in scale and located within an area identified as being at low risk of flooding, officers are satisfied that suitable foul and surface water drainage arrangements can be secured through Building Regulations and other relevant legislative frameworks outside the planning system.

*Accessible and Adaptable Homes
Policy LP25 of the Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals that include housing to meet the optional Building Regulation requirement M4(2)" Accessible and adaptable dwellings" unless it can be demonstrated that site specific factors make this unachievable. A condition should be imposed upon any consent to ensure that the development is built in accordance with these standards and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

*Water Efficiency
Policy LP12(j) of the Local Plan to 2036 requires proposals that include housing to comply with the optional building regulation for water efficiency, as set out in Approved Document G.
A condition should be imposed upon any consent to ensure that the development is built in accordance with these standards and maintained for the life of the development

*Other matters
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):
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.

Developer Contributions:
Development Obligations - Part H of the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (2011) requires a payment towards refuse bins for new residential development.

A completed Unilateral Undertaking for the provision of wheeled bins dated 15th January 2025 has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority. The proposal therefore meets the requirements of the Developer Contributions SPD (2011) and Policy LP4 of the Local Plan to 2036.

There are no other material planning considerations which have a significant bearing on the determination of this application.

*Conclusion:
On balance, the proposed development is considered to be compliant with relevant national and local planning policy as:
-The principle of erecting a single residential dwelling to the rear of No.19 Bury Road is acceptable.
-The proposal would not result in an unsustainable form of development.
-The proposed development would have no significant adverse impact on the overall appearance and character of the conservation area or upon residential amenity.

-The proposal would not have a significant impact on protected trees within or adjacent to the application site.
-The proposal includes acceptable arrangements for access and parking to ensure there are no significant impacts to highway safety.
-There are no other material planning considerations which have a significant bearing on the determination of this application

It is therefore recommended that planning permission should be granted subject to conditions.

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:
Enquiries about this report to **Charlotte Dew**