

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Vicki Wood.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/01417/FPH	Single storey rear extension. Installation of retaining walls and alterations to ground levels in rear garden.	29 Ashfield Drive Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 1GP

Submitted Plan Nos

A107 A010 Rev 2 A100 A101 A105 Rev 2 A106 Rev 2

1.0 Policies

1.0 **Local and National Policy**

1.1 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)**

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Section 14 - Meeting the challenges of climate change, flooding and coastal change

1.2 **North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031)**

Strategic Policies

Policy SP1 – Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire

Policy SP2 – Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution

Policy SP9 – Design and Sustainability

Development Management Policies

Policy D1 – Sustainable design

Policy D2 – House extensions, replacement dwellings and outbuildings

Policy D3 – Protecting living conditions

Policy HE4 - Archaeology

1.4 **Supplementary Planning Design (SPD)**

NHC Sustainability (2024)

2.0 **Relevant Site History**

2.1 Under 14/01403/1 for residential redevelopment of site to provide 159 dwellings comprising of 12 x 1 bedroom flats; 24 x 2 bedroom flats; 12 x 2 bedroom houses; 30 x 3 bedroom houses and 81 x 4 bedroom houses. Two new vehicular accesses onto Blackhorse Road following closure of existing accesses; associated parking and internal access roads, landscaping, amenity spaces and ancillary works following demolition of existing factory building. (As amended by plans received 1st, 7th and 14th August 2014 and 2nd September 2014), Condition 20 removed permitted development rights as set out in Classes A-F of Part 1, Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended).

2.2 Full site history on case file.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Site and Neighbour Consultation** – None received.

3.2 **LGCHF** – None received.

3.3 **HCC Archaeology** – None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The application site is located on the north-western side of Ashfield Drive and comprises of a two-storey detached dwelling with a semi-detached garage positioned on its eastern side, set back from the footprint of the dwelling. The rear garden slopes gradually upwards towards the rear boundary of the site. Along the western boundary is a detached garage serving the adjoining property. Beyond the garages, the boundary treatment consists of a timber fence approximately 1.8 metres in height.

4.1.2 The application site is within the settlement boundary for Letchworth where development is generally acceptable subject to policy requirements.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Single storey rear extension. Installation of retaining walls and alterations to ground levels in rear garden.

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are as follows:

- The acceptability of the design of the proposed development and its resultant impact on the character and appearance of the area.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on the living conditions of neighbouring properties.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on car parking provision in the area.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on the environment.

Design and Appearance

4.3.2 The objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include those seeking to secure the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places (Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places). Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that *“Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”*. In this regard, Policy D1 and D2 of the Local Plan are consistent with the objectives set out within the NPPF.

4.3.3 The proposed development comprises a modest single storey rear extension to the dwelling. The extension would feature a flat roof incorporating two roof lanterns. Bi-folding doors are proposed on the rear elevation, providing access to the retained garden space.

- 4.3.4 In addition to the proposed extension, the proposal includes the regrading of the rear garden to create a level outdoor garden space. To facilitate the alteration in site levels, low-level brick retaining walls are proposed along the garden boundaries. The retaining walls would be constructed within the application site, whilst the existing timber boundary fencing would be retained in situ.
- 4.3.5 The extension would be constructed using materials that match, or closely complement, those of the existing dwelling, ensuring a cohesive appearance and an appropriate visual relationship with the host property.
- 4.3.6 The proposal would not be visible in the street scene or from public views in this area. Furthermore, the proposal would not be out of keeping with the general character of the area and reflects the character of the existing property and similar extensions in the vicinity. In design terms I am satisfied that the addition would not be visually detrimental to the character and appearance of the area and would be in accordance with Policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties:

- 4.3.7 A core planning principle set out in the NPPF is to always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. This principle is reflected in the provisions of Policy D3 of the Local Plan.
- 4.3.8 I am satisfied that the proposed extension, by virtue of its position on the property and its relationship to existing built form, would not impact existing residential amenity to any significant degree and would be in accordance with Policy D3 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.9 The dwelling is served by sufficient off-street parking spaces which would not be affected by the proposed development.

Archaeology

- 4.3.10 When considering the impact of proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset (such as archaeology), the NPPF (Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) notes that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation; the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. In this regard, Policy HE4 of the Local Plan is consistent with the NPPF.
- 4.3.11 The proposed development is of a minor scale within an already built-up area and is unlikely to disrupt subterranean heritage.
- 4.3.12 I am satisfied that the development is in accordance with Policy HE4 of the Local Plan and Section 16 of the NPPF.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 4.3.13 The development is not subject to the statutory biodiversity gain condition, as it falls within one of the exemptions set out in paragraph 17 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024

Environmental Implications

- 4.3.14 The Council's Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (2024) seeks to ensure that new developments are future proofed against the challenge of climate change.
- 4.3.15 Section 14 of the NPPF sets out how the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future. The principles set out in Section 14 are reflected in Policy D1 of the Local Plan, which sets out that development proposals should take all reasonable opportunities to reduce energy consumption and waste, retain existing vegetation and propose new appropriate planting, and future proof for changes in technology and lifestyle.
- 4.3.16 Based on the details submitted, the proposed development, is unlikely to have any significant implications for the local environment in terms of carbon emissions and therefore would be generally in compliance with Policy D1 of the Local Plan and Section 14 of the NPPF.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposed development is considered acceptable and in accordance with Policies SP1, SP9, D1, D2, D3 and HE4 of the Local Plan 2011-2031 and Sections 2, 12 and 14 of the NPPF 2024.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 N/A

4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 N/A

5.0 **Recommendation**

- 5.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting approved documents and plans listed above.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of permission.

3. The extension hereby permitted shall be built in external materials to match the existing dwellinghouse unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the visual amenities of the locality and to comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted proactively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Signed  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 30 July 2026	