

CONSERVATION TEAM CONSULTATION APPLICATION RESPONSE

APPLICATION REF:	26/01468/FPH
CASE OFFICER:	VW
APPLICATION SITE:	20 Hodwell, Ashwell, Baldock, Hertfordshire SG7 5QQ
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Single storey side extensions, following demolition of existing western side element. Removal of existing porch and erection of a replacement porch canopy. Alterations to fenestration, external render, and replacement of roof tiles. Installation of solar panel array to south and west facing roof slopes (as amended by additional details received on 02/07/2026).

RECOMMENDATION:

I raise **NO OBJECTION** to this proposal on the basis that the proposal will satisfy the aims of Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031, para 135 c and Section 16 of the NPPF (December 2024).

SITE CONTEXT:

No.20 Hodwell is an unlisted building in the Ashwell Conservation Area.



A small square building with clunch walls and slate pyramid roof (the village Lock-up) sits within the front garden to no.20 and is grade II listed (see entry below):

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1102712?section=official-list-entry>

The lock-up is a well-photographed village landmark and features in the book entitled 'Snippets of Ashwell History – Volume 1' in which it says:

The Lock-up, one of four surviving in Hertfordshire, was built in 1800. A chapel on the north-east corners of the chancel of St Mary's Church was taken down in 1799. The blocks of Totternhoe chalk were not wasted but used to build the Lock-up. Incidentally, evidence for the chapel can still be seen; in the chancel there are two doorways, and the blocked-up one would have led into the chapel.

To the north of lock-up stands no.28 (also called The Green) which is also grade II listed (see entry below):

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1347314?section=official-list-entry>

To the south-east stands a grade II listed barn at the rear of The Three Tuns Hotel, High Street:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1102746?section=official-list-entry>

The conservation area and the aforementioned listed buildings are all Designated Heritage Assets for the purpose of applying the aims of Section of the NPPF and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031. Below is a Google Maps image Aug 2008 which although taken 18 years ago places the Lock-up between no.30 Hodwell on the left and Moss Cottages, nos. 8 -18 (evens only) Hodwell to the right. No.30 and Moss Cottages make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Ashwell Conservation Area. No.20 sits unassumingly behind the lock-up having limited impact upon its setting.



DETAILED ANALYSIS AND CONSIDERATIONS:

On 17 March 2026 I provided comments under ref: 26/00256/PREH.

No.20 has a neutral impact in terms of the character and appearance of the conservation area, so the key question is whether the proposal maintains this neutral impact or enhances or would the proposal have a negative impact. The Planning Statement says:

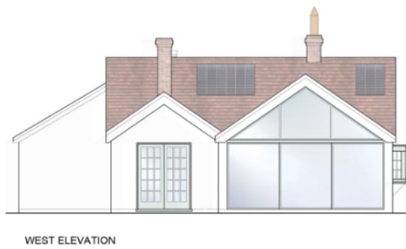
The scheme includes the demolition of the existing west-facing single-storey flat roof extension, which does not complement the character of the original dwelling and provides limited usable space. This extension is to be replaced with a new single-storey addition designed to enhance the connection between the main living areas and the garden, while also improving the building's overall environmental performance.

The Planning Statement goes on to say:

The proposed material palette has been carefully considered, seeking to change the render finish from the existing pink roughcast to a smooth off-white render. Historic photographs indicate that the property was originally finished in an off-white colour, with the pink render introduced by a previous owner in the late 1970s. The proposed finish is considered more sympathetic to the character of the dwelling and the wider Conservation Area.

At pre-app I commented that the west facing extension is subservient to the host building thus would not have a particularly imposing impact in terms of scale. However, what is currently a tiled backdrop to the lock-up (roof of existing dwelling) would be transformed by painted verge boards and a 'wall' of glazing. I also suggested reducing the amount of glazing in this hipped end by introducing a greater amount of painted render wall on either side.

Pre-app scheme



WEST ELEVATION

Suggested changes to pre-app scheme



WEST ELEVATION

Latest iteration



WEST ELEVATION

I also suggested introducing a hipped roof (yellow line in image below) to maintain a less strident background to the lock-up and which would also reduce the overall roof form in a positive way.



SOUTH ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

The following is written in the submitted Planning Statement but does not mention the suggested hipped roof treatment as part of the pre-app feedback:

The proposal has been developed through pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority, during which concerns were raised regarding the originally proposed fully glazed west-facing gable. In response, the design was revised to remove the high-level glazing and reduce the overall extent of glazing visible from the public realm. These amendments significantly reduce the prominence of the extension when viewed in relation to the listed lock-up and the wider Conservation Area. The proposal retains the established bungalow form and does not introduce a scale, massing or design approach that would appear intrusive within the street scene. The replacement of the existing flat-roofed element with a more coherent pitched roof form and the use of an off-white render are considered sympathetic to the character of the area.

Although I remain of the view that a hipped roof finish would be better, what is proposed is not on balance considered harmful to the character and appearance of the Ashwell Conservation Area. I also raise no objection to re-roofing using the Acme Single Camber Heather Blend Fine Sanded Finish and omitting the window to the right-hand side of the porch is modest improvement. It would, however, be worthwhile considering the following conditions relating to window and door joinery:

1. All new windows and external doors shall be manufactured in timber, and the windows shall have flush casements unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to character and appearance of the Ashwell Conservation Area under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.

2. For all new windows and external doors, joinery details at a metric scale including 1:1 scale drawing of the glazing and glazing bar profile shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the windows and doors shall be manufactured and installed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to character and appearance of the Ashwell Conservation Area under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.

HERITAGE POLICY ASSESSMENT:

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:
Sections 66(1) and 72(1)

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031:
Policy HE1

NPPF (December 2024):
The following paragraphs are relevant:

- **135 c)** (*sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment*),
- **207** (*local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting*)
- **210** (*desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*),
- **212** (*great weight should be given to the asset's conservation*),
- **213** (*clear and convincing justification*), and
- **215** (*harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use*).

CONCLUSION:
No objection.

OFFICER: Mark Simmons

DATE: 10/08/2026