

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Harriet Sanders.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/03103/FP	Conversion of gardeners store to security guard office including external alterations.	Hexton Manor Hexton Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 3JH

Submitted Plan Nos

2025-37-102 2025-37-101

1.0 Policies

NE3	The Chilterns AONB
D1	Sustainable design
SP9	Design and Sustainability
T2	Parking
HE1	Designated heritage assets

D3 Protecting living conditions

SP5 Countryside and Green Belt

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 Associated application - pending:

25/03104/LBC - *“Internal and external alterations to facilitate conversion of gardeners store to security guard office.”*

2.2 There is a substantial planning history for works to Hexton Manor. There is no planning history for the gardener’s store building on file.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 Neighbour notification was carried out and site and press notices posted.

3.2 The Gardens’ Trust - do not wish to comment on the proposals.

3.4 Hexton Parish Council – no comment at the time of writing this report.

3.5 NHDC Conservation Officer makes the following comments:

“I raise NO OBJECTION on the basis that the proposal will neither harm the grade II listed wall to which the gardener’s store is attached or harm the wider setting of Hexton Manor impacting upon its significance or harm the character or appearance of the Hexton Conservation Area or adversely impact upon the registered park and gardens. The proposal will satisfy the provisions of Section 16(2) (LBC only), Section 66(1) (FPH only) and 72(1) (both) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031.”

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 Hexton Manor is grade II listed and is located within the Hexton Conservation Area and also within a grade II Registered Park and Garden. The gardener’s store is a curtilage-listed building that is also adjacent to the grade II listed walled garden of Hexton Manor. The building and the area are designated heritage assets for the purpose of applying the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF.

4.1.2 The site falls within the Green Belt and is an AONB.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Consent is sought for:

“Conversion of gardeners store to security guard office including external alterations.”

4.2.3 Materials proposed:

- ☐ Windows – timber painted white to match existing.
- ☐ Doors – renewed to match existing.
- ☐ Replace white upvc guttering and downpipes with pvc cast iron replica guttering and downpipes.

4.2.4 The alterations include:

- ☐ Replacement of timber windows with matching timber windows.
- ☐ Alteration to widest window to front elevation to be enlarged in height to match the height of the other three existing windows, with the brickwork removed to suit.
- ☐ Replacement of ledged and braced timber doors to match existing.
- ☐ Replacement of the white vertical timber slatted doors, to match existing.

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are:

- ☐ Acceptability of the development in the Green Belt.
- ☐ Principle of proposed use.
- ☐ Design and appearance of the development and impact on the designated heritage assets.
- ☐ Impact on amenity of neighbouring occupiers.
- ☐ Access and parking.
- ☐ Impact on the environment.

Acceptability of the development in the Green Belt

4.3.2 The NPPF states at para 154 that all development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of a list of exceptions applies. Exceptions c and h iv state:

“c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;”

“h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:

iv) the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction

4.3.3 The proposed conversion of the gardener's store to security guard office requires some minor alterations to bring the building into use. The alterations will not increase the size of the building and will reuse a permanent and substantial structure. The exception criteria listed in NPPF are therefore met and the proposal would not cause unacceptable harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

4.3.4 The proposal is therefore in accordance with Section 13 of the NPPF, and Policy SP5 of the Local Plan.

Principle of proposed use

4.3.5 It is proposed to convert the gardener store to a new security guard office. Both uses are ancillary to the main dwelling and support the residential use of Hexton Manor. The proposed conversion is acceptable.

Design and appearance of the development and Impact on the designated heritage assets.

4.3.6 The building is considered to be curtilage listed to the main listed building of Hexton Manor, a grade II listed building. The store is adjacent the listed walled garden of Hexton Manor and also located within the Hexton Conservation Area. The grounds of Hexton Manor are designated as a historic park and garden.

4.3.7 The proposed works are minor and will enhance the overall appearance of the building.

4.3.8 The conservation officer advised no objection to the proposed development and concluded that the proposal would have very limited impact upon the designated heritage assets below:

- ☐ *the grade II listed wall to which the gardener's store is attached*
- ☐ *the wider setting of Hexton Manor,*
- ☐ *the character or appearance of the Hexton Conservation Area and*
- ☐ *the registered park and gardens.*

4.3.9 There will be no impact upon the AONB as it is an existing structure.

4.3.10 The design and appearance of the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the provisions of Policies SP9, HE1, D1 and NE3 of the Local Plan, and the requirements of the NPPF.

Impact on amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

4.3.11 The building is set well within the grounds of Hexton Manor and is set comfortably away from all other properties. The development will not have any detrimental impact

on the living conditions of any nearby occupiers. The proposal complies with D3 of the Local Plan and the requirements of the NPPF.

Access and parking.

- 4.3.12 No change to the existing access is proposed. There is ample parking close to the building for the security guard use. Acceptable.

Impact on the environment.

- 4.3.13 Minor development – minor impact on environment.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 Acceptable.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None applicable

4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 Not applicable.

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.

Biodiversity Net Gain

1. This development is not subject to the statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan condition because it is considered exempt under the statutory exemptions (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>) or transitional arrangements in respect of the biodiversity gain condition.

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  Shaun Greaves Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 3 March 2026	