DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Heather Lai.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
18/01421/FP	Raise roof ridge height at rear and rear roof extension, and single storey rear extension. Blocking up of existing window and door to the north side elevation at ground floor level and creation of new door opening to ground floor front elevation. All works to facilitate internal reconfigurations to existing two residential units.	12A Highbury Road Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9RW

Submitted Plan Nos

Location plan 1980-01 1980-02 1980-PL01 1980-PL02 Rev. A 1980-PL03 Rev. A 1980-PL04 1980-PL07

1.0 Policies

1.1 **North Hertfordshire District Council Local Plan No. 2 with alterations**
Policy 28 – Housing Extensions
Policy 55 – Car Parking Standards

1.2 **National Planning Policy Framework**
Section 7 – Requiring good design

1.3 **Emerging Local Plan 2011-2031 (Approved by Full Council 11th April 2017)**

D1 - Sustainable Design;
D2 – House extensions and replacement dwellings;
D3 – Protecting living conditions;
T2 – Parking

1.4 **Supplementary Planning Document**
Vehicle Parking at New Development September 2011

2.0 **Site History**
17/02183/1: Erection of 1 x 3 bed dwelling. Refused on 21.12.2017 for the following reasons:

1) The proposed development, due to its location, would be back-land development out of keeping with the pattern of development in the area; and the form and design of the dwelling would not reflect the form and design of existing dwellings here. As such, it would be harmful to the character and appearance of Hitchin Conservation Area. Furthermore, the proposal would set an undesirable precedent for similar such development and this would amount to significant harm to the significance of this designated heritage asset. The development would, therefore, fail to satisfy the provisions of Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and as supported by Section 12 and paragraph 53 of the national Planning Policy Framework.

2) Due to the location of the site, position and orientation of the proposed dwelling, the development would result in a significant loss of privacy to and would have an overbearing effect upon the occupiers of 40 The Avenue. As such, the development would be contrary to Policy 57 of North Hertfordshire District Local Plan No. 2 with Alterations and paragraph 17 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

3) The application has failed to demonstrate that the access from the highway and the proposed access road would adhere to guidelines in, or are in accordance with, 'Manual for Streets (MfS)' and 'Roads in Hertfordshire: A Design Guide', 2011. As such, this is likely to lead to conditions prejudicial to highway safety and would be contrary to Section 4 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

3.0 **Representations**
Local residents: no objections.

Highways Authority: No objection subject to proposed condition regarding vehicle crossover

Design and Conservation Officer: No objection to proposed works, with the exception of the rear roof extension. Resist a prominent and modern feature which would sit flush with the rear gables/principal rear wall.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**
The application site is a two storey (plus part basement) double gabled detached residential building which has been historically subdivided into two flats which are configured laterally across the building in a confusing arrangement . It is located within the Hitchin Conservation Area and is also subject to an Article 4 Direction. It is surrounded by similar semi and detached Victorian and early 20th Century dwellings and is in a predominantly residential area, however to the north the adjacent property (no. 11) is in use as a D1 childcare facility and to the opposite side of the road is an industrial site, with Hitchin Girls School being located to the south up the hill.

4.2 **Proposal**
The application seeks permission for the erection of a single storey rear extension, and to raise the ridge height of the rear roof and erect roof level extensions to facilitate extensions at second floor level. A new opening (entrance door) is proposed to the front elevation to provide access to no. 12, and the existing door to the north side elevation and a window are to be blocked up.

4.3 **Key Issues**
Land use principle:

The application site, 12 and 12a is in lawful use as two Class C3 residential units. The proposal seeks external alterations to provide additional living accommodation for both these units, and internal alterations are also to be undertaken to reconfigure the two units providing more functional floorspace, with the two units to be divided vertically rather than laterally across the different floors. As there are two units existing at the site, and the proposal seeks to retain two units which will provide family sized accommodation, it is considered the proposal is acceptable in land use terms.

Design:
Policy 28 suggests that house extensions are generally acceptable providing they are *"...sympathetic to the existing house in height, form, proportions, window details and materials..."* and *"...pitched roofs are used where appropriate..."Rear extensions should not dominate adjoining property and should be well related to the levels of adjoining properties, the direction the house faces, and the distance between the extension and the windows in the next door properties.*

The proposed extension is to be at ground floor level to the rear of no. 12. It would be viewed as a half width extension to the original building, but is to be full width to the reconfigured unit known as no. 12. It is proposed to be a brick extension with bifolding doors to the rear wall. The proposed extension is to be 3m deep, and there will be a 3m deep terrace to the end of this, which will have 1.8m high screens to the sides of this terrace. This rear extension and associated terrace are considered acceptable in design terms, it remains subservient to the host building, and would be seen from limited private views only.

The proposal also seeks to raise the ridge height of the roof to the rear from a half hip to a gabled end (to the southern side of the building), the installation of a window to the top of the gabled brickwork and the removal of a chimney in order to facilitate the erection of a partially glazed roof extension between the two gables to the rear roof. These works are proposed in

order to enable additional roof level accommodation (to provide additional habitable space for both no. 12 and 12a).

The alterations to raise the pitch will allow greater uniformity to the rear of the building, resulting in two gabled ends. The proposed small semi-circular headed arch window to the new rear gable will match that to the front of the dwelling and is acceptable in design and conservation terms. While the loss of the chimney (which extends externally from first floor level on the rear) is regrettable no objection is raised in conservation terms given its location on the rear.

The proposed roof extension between the two gables, resulting in a flat roof to the rear/middle of the building would result in a modern addition to this rear elevation. The proposal originally sought for this extension to be flush with the principal rear wall, and for large triangular glazed windows. However the Conservation Officer considered this would be too prominent and amendments were sought to set the extension back behind the principal rear wall, and also to reduce the amount of glazing to this section of the extension. While this would still be a prominent feature following the agreed amendments, it is considered this roof extension would remain subservient and is to be below the height of the principle roof ridge. Therefore it is considered acceptable in design terms.

No objection is raised to the blocking up of the existing door and window to the north side elevation, and the installation of a new window opening (with timber sash proposed); this is not considered to harm the character and appearance of the host building or wider Conservation Area. The door opening is to be replaced to the northern wing on the front elevation, which will balance the front of the building as the existing entrance to no. 12a sits to the side of the front elevation to the south (albeit this is to be made redundant as an entrance door and will serve as a utility room under the reconfigured arrangement).

It is considered the proposal is acceptable in design terms and accords with Policy 28.

Amenity:
To the north the closest adjacent property is no. 11, which is in use as Highbury Lodge Nursery (Class D1 use); therefore there is no loss of residential amenity to this elevation. It is worth noting however, that the application site is set away from the boundary with no. 11 and there is sufficient existing boundary treatment to the side elevation. The proposed alterations, including the rear extension to no. 12 will not result in increased overlooking between no.11 and the application site.

To the south, Highbury Road extends up a hill, and adjoining no. 13 is on a slightly higher elevation than the application site. Both the host building, and no. 13 are positioned away from their shared boundary and the proposed works will not result in extensions or fenestration adjacent to no. 13; the rear extension is to be positioned to the opposite side of the application site. As such, it is considered the proposed works will not result in a material loss of amenity for occupants of no. 13, namely loss of light, privacy or an increase in overlooking.

To the west, the opposite side of Highbury Road adjacent the application site has an industrial use, and the application site has a significant rear garden, with a public path to the rear and therefore there are no residential dwellings to the immediate east of no. 12 that would be materially affected by the application proposals.

The proposal is considered acceptable in amenity terms and accords with Policy 28 of the saved Local Plan and Policy D3 of the emerging Local Plan.

Highways/Car parking:

The proposed development would not trigger the requirement for additional car parking to be provided within the application site, however the applicants have confirmed that the parking arrangements are to be reconfigured to provide an additional car parking space to the rear, resulting in one space for each dwelling. While it is generally expected that two car parking spaces would be provided for units of this size, given the units are already in lawful use, and the proximity of the site to both Hitchin Railway Station and the town centre, a net increase is a welcome addition.

The Highways Authority, the statutory consultee for highways matters have responded and provided the following comments:

The proposals use the existing vehicle crossover (VXO) / dropped kerb to provide access for both the existing and proposed dwellings. The applicant has indicated that there are to be no alterations to the existing VXO although the proposals do include widening the existing entrance into the property by 450mm to approximately 3m. The access is considered to be acceptable and would improve visibility at the existing access. HCC as Highway Authority has considered that the vehicle to vehicle visibility from the accesses would be satisfactory and acceptable for the level of use they will receive and the speed of traffic and is in accordance with guidelines in *Roads in Hertfordshire; Highway Design Guide* and *Manual for Streets (MfS).* The existing vehicular access gates would need to be removed or set back at least 5.5m from back from edge of the highway carriageway to ensure that any vehicles can safely draw off the highway whilst the gates are being opened or closed. A new pedestrian entrance / access from the footway has also been included, which is acceptable.

The applicant refers to the provision of two on-site car parking spaces to the rear of the building accessed via the existing driveway, one space for each dwelling. The layout plan provided includes a turning head to ensure that vehicles are able to turn around and egress to the highway in forward gear, which a necessary requisite when egressing onto a local distributor road. The turning head would need to be kept clear at all times to ensure that it is available to use.

Subject to a condition recommended by the Highways Authority that the VXO be widened before the completion of the works, the proposals are considered acceptable on highways and parking grounds.

Nature conservation:
The applicants submitted a preliminary bat roosting survey which appears to demonstrate that there are no bats roosting in the roof of the application site. This is noted and given the proposal is to an existing domestic dwelling, no conditions relating to protected species are to be recommended.

4.4 **Conclusion**
In the absence of material planning reasons to the contrary it is my view that planning permission should be **GRANTED.**

5.0 **<u>Recommendation</u>**

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. Prior to the completion of the development, the amended vehicular access (as shown on drawing number PL07) shall be upgraded / widened to a minimum width of 3 metres. Prior to use arrangements shall be made for surface water drainage to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the highway carriageway.

   Reason: In the interest of highway safety and traffic movement.

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 (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Signed  Simon Ellis Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 24 July 2018	