

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Thomas Howe.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/02658/FPH	Part single, part two storey front, side and rear extension and associated works following demolition of existing front entrance porch. Partial conversion of detached single garage into home office.	88 Old Hale Way Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 1XR

Submitted Plan Nos

PL.001 PL.002 PL.003 PL.004 PL.005 PL.006 (1) PL.007 (2) PL.008 PL.009

1.0 Policies

D1	Sustainable design
D2	House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild
D3	Protecting living conditions

T2 Parking

SECN12 Achieving well-designed places

SECN14 Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 No previous site history.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Neighbour Representations** – None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 No. 88 comprises an end of terrace two storey dwelling at the corners of Old Hale Way, and The Mead in Hitchin. Land levels drop off along The Mead, down and away from the side/rear elevation.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Planning Permission is sought for:

- The erection of a part single, part two storey front, side and rear extension and associated works following the demolition of existing front entrance porch.
- Partial conversion of the detached single garage into a home office.

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 Policy D1 of the Local Plan states that development will be granted provided the design of the development appropriately and positively responds to the site's local context together with other criteria to encourage a positive and sustainable form of development. Policy D2 of the Local Plan requires extensions to houses and the erection or replacement of buildings to incorporate design that is sympathetic to the main dwelling in terms of its scale, form and orientation and does not harm the character and appearance of the locality around the site. These policies are broadly consistent with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.3.3 To the dwelling, and as viewed from Old Hale Way, an extension would be erected to the north, appearing as a side extension as viewed from Old Hale Way. This would comprise a gabled projection, two storeys in height with a modest single storey projection. The principal elevation, with the main access point is off The Mead, and this elevation would benefit from these two storey extensions. As viewed from this elevation a projection to the south would extend at two storeys in height, with a set-down ridge, adjoining the extensions to the northern elevation. The eastern elevation faces down The Mead, incorporating a gable feature two storeys in height, and adjoins the wrap around single storey extension.
- 4.3.4 The application dwelling sits at a prominent position at the corners of Old Hale Way and The Mead, with land levels exacerbating this prominence by siting the dwelling at the top of the slop along The Mead. Old Hale Way also curves away from the site, with clear views of the dwelling being found from vantage points along Old Hale Way, notably, from the northern end of the road. The proposal seeks to significantly extend and enlarge the host dwelling, introducing extensions to most elevations. I consider that the overall bulk and built form, by introducing the gables to the eastern and northern elevations and the various roof slopes and forms, would result in an unacceptable form of development, which would appear as an unduly prominent and incongruous addition to the street scene. This would harm local character and the street scene, along both The Mead and Old Hale Way. Furthermore, the incongruous nature of the development is considered to erode the relatively consistent principal elevations of dwellings along Old Hale Way, by introducing varying ridge heights and roof forms to the sides of dwellings, where most dwellings presently do not benefit from similar extensions along this road. Furthermore, the built form and layout of the extensions is considered to be contrived and would fail to enhance the appearance of the dwelling and the wider street scene.
- 4.3.5 Given the minimal changes to the garage, I do not consider that this element of the proposal would be significantly harmful to local character and design and would therefore be acceptable.
- 4.3.6 The proposed development is therefore not considered to be in compliance with Policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan and the core principles set out within Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The design and appearance are therefore considered to be unacceptable.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties:

- 4.3.7 Policy D3 of the Local Plan permits development that does not result in unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and where necessary encourages the use of mitigation measures to reduce these impacts. This is generally reflected by the provisions within the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.3.8 The application dwelling is adjoined by No. 86 Old Hale Way, and No. 2 Lammas Mead to the rear. The proposal would extend beyond the rear elevation of No. 86 at ground and two storey level by approximately 3.6, though the two-storey element would be set-off the boundary. The two-storey element would also comprise a reduced ridge height. Given the siting to the rear, and the relatively modest depth, I do not consider that the development would overbear or overshadow these neighbouring occupiers. Outlook would be predominantly like what is existing and is therefore not considered to be harmful or detrimental. For No. 2 Lammas Mead, the levels drop down to this neighbour is acknowledged, however, the presence of the garage, and the separation distance is considered to suitably mitigate the increase in bulk and the new proximity of the first-floor windows facing this neighbour. It is noted that no neighbour objections were received.
- 4.3.9 Given the above, it is considered that the proposed development would result in no unacceptable detrimental impact upon neighbouring occupiers and is therefore compliant with Policy D3 of the local plan and the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposed design of the development is not considered acceptable and is therefore considered to run contrary with the necessary provisions of the Local Plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework. Significant harm would be caused to the character and appearance of the street scene and surrounding area due to the scale, layout, and appearance of the development, together with its contrived nature. Refuse planning permission.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None applicable.

5.0 **Recommendation**

- 5.1 That planning permission be **REFUSED** for the following reasons:

1. The proposed extensions, by reason of their scale, design and layout, would not be sympathetic to the host dwelling and would be harmful to the prevailing character and appearance of the area. The development would not respond positively to the site's local context or be sympathetic to the existing house, contrary to Policy D1 and D2 of the North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031 and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been refused for this proposal for the clear reasons set out in this decision notice. The Council has not acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant as in the Council's view the proposal is unacceptable in principle and the fundamental objections cannot be overcome through dialogue. Since no solutions can be found the Council has complied 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: 12 December 2025	