

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Tabitha Kaye.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/00155/FPH	Erection of detached ancillary gym/office outbuilding including alterations to ground levels and hardscaping works following demolition of existing rear garage.	Thistley View Thistley Lane Gosmore Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 7QT

Submitted Plan Nos

1178-01 1178-04 1178-05 1178-PL01 1178-PL02 1178-06

1.0 Policies

SECN12 Achieving well-designed places

SECN13	Protecting Green Belt Land
SECN14	Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding
SP5	Countryside and Green Belt
SP9	Design and Sustainability
D1	Sustainable design
D2	House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild
D3	Protecting living conditions
T2	Parking

2.0 **Site History**

- 2.1 15/00918/1DOC: Condition 4 - Sample Materials (as discharge of condition attached to planning ref 14/03373/1 granted permission 06/02/2015). Approval of Details (02/04/2015).
- 2.2 15/02115/1NMA: Relocate rear garage window onto the side elevation (as Non-Material Amendment to Planning application 14/03373/1 granted 06/02/2015). Withdrawn Not Proceeded With (07/08/2015).

- 2.3 14/03373/1: Erection of 4 bed detached dwelling following demolition of existing dwelling. Conditional Permission (06/02/2015).

3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 **Neighbour Consultation** – None received at the time of writing report.

- 3.2 **St Ippolyts Parish Council** – No objection.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The application site accommodates a detached, two-storey chalet style bungalow dwelling situated on Thistley Lane, Gosmore. The site is located outside of the Gosmore settlement boundary and is brushed over by the Green Belt. The site benefits from a long front driveway with parking provision, and a large rear garden. Views of the rear garden from the street are obscured by the long driveway and the bulk of the main dwelling.
- 4.1.2 The main house is a replacement dwelling, permitted under 14/03373/1. Permitted development rights under Schedule 2, Part 1, Classes A-F were removed under this application.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Erection of detached ancillary gym/office outbuilding including alterations to ground levels and landscaping works following demolition of existing rear garage.

4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are as follows:

- The impact of the proposal upon the Green Belt;

- The acceptability of the design of the proposed development and its impact on the character and appearance of the area;
- The impact of the proposed development on the living conditions of neighbouring properties;
- Highways and parking matters;
- The impact of the proposed development on the environment.

The Impact on the Green Belt

4.3.2 Policy SP5 states that development proposals in the Green Belt will only be permitted where they would not result in inappropriate development, or where very special circumstances have been demonstrated. Policy SP5 is commensurate with Paragraph 154 of Section 13 of the NPPF, which states that development within the Green Belt is inappropriate unless it falls within one of the exemptions, including:

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.

Thistley View is a replacement dwelling, permitted under 14/03373/1. For the purposes of paragraph 154(c), 'original' is to be interpreted as the replacement dwelling.

4.3.3 In relation to the proposed outbuilding, it is established by case law that a detached structure can be considered an extension to a building, providing that the building is within domestic curtilage. The outbuilding in question, which is currently used as a garage/store, has a clear incidental link to the main dwelling in its scale, as well as its proximity to the house.

4.3.4 The existing footprint of the dwelling, including the existing outbuilding, measures as 214 sqm. The proposed replacement outbuilding would increase the total footprint to 233.9 sqm; an increase of 9.3%. On account of this, I consider that the proposed replacement outbuilding would not be a disproportionate addition to the original dwelling and therefore complies with paragraph 154(c).

4.3.5 While the proposal would not constitute 'inappropriate development', it is still important to consider whether the proposal would have an adverse impact on the five purposes of the Green Belt, as outlined by paragraph 143 of the NPPF, as well as harm to its openness, as required by paragraph 153. Taking each in turn:

a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas – the proposed development would be confined to the domestic curtilage of the dwelling and would be minimal in scale. Therefore, the proposal complies with 143(a);

b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another – see above;

- c) *to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment* – see above;
- d) *to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns* – the dwelling is distanced from the main settlement of Gosmore and therefore would comply with 143(d);
- e) *to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land* – N/A.

In relation to openness, the proposed development would result in a minor increase in footprint, as well as a minimal increase in built form. The outbuilding would be sited in the same position as the existing outbuilding, which is within close proximity to the main dwelling. The associated landscaping works would not be significant as to impact the openness of the Green Belt. Therefore, the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on openness.

- 4.3.6 Overall, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable within the Green Belt.

Design

- 4.3.7 Policies D1 and D2 of the NHLP require that development proposals respond positively to the site's local context. Policy D2 specifies that outbuildings should not harm the character of the site, or the locality. These policies are broadly consistent with paragraph 135 of the NPPF.
- 4.3.8 The proposed landscaping works include reducing the ground level to address the large variation in levels to the immediate rear of the dwelling. The bulk of the existing outbuilding currently sits at a level of +96.95. This is to be reduced to approx. +94.50, and steps are to be added to the grass area which immediately fronts the outbuilding to connect with the existing rear patio area which sits at +93.20. To the south of the outbuilding, which faces the wider garden, the levels would be immediately graduated back to approx. +95.0, to match the rest of the garden. The change in levels and provision of steps would therefore be assimilated well within the context of the site and is acceptable in design terms.
- 4.3.9 The proposed outbuilding, to accommodate a home office/gym, would replace the existing garage outbuilding in the rear garden. The new outbuilding would be sited in the same location but would be larger in scale, measuring 4.6m in depth and 8.5m in width. The outbuilding would have a dual pitched roof, measuring 2.4m to the eaves and 4.2m to the ridge. The scale and siting of the proposed outbuilding is considered to be acceptable within the site context. A series of timber framed double doors would feature to the west elevation, and a timber framed window to north elevation. The outbuilding would be constructed of an oak frame, with brick infills and a render finish, as well as plain roof tiles. The proposed materials would be sympathetic to the host dwelling.

- 4.3.10 Overall, the proposal therefore accords with Policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan, as well as paragraph 135 of Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Impact on Neighbours

- 4.3.11 Policy D3 of the Local Plan permits development that does not result in acceptable harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and encourages the use of mitigation measures where necessary. Policy D3 is generally reflected by the provisions of the NPPF.
- 4.3.12 The only neighbour within proximity to the site is Thistley House to the east. The proposed outbuilding would be sited in the same position as the existing outbuilding along the east boundary, which is sited parallel to an outbuilding of a similar scale within the front curtilage of Thistley House. Furthermore, the replacement outbuilding would be set lower than the existing because of the associated landscaping works, which would obscure any outward views. Therefore, it is considered that proposed works would not result in any overshadowing, overbearing or overlooking impacts to Thistley House.
- 4.3.13 The outbuilding is to be used as a home office/gym. Therefore, there would be no intensification of use of the site as a result of the proposed development. The outbuilding will be conditioned to remain as ancillary to the main dwelling.
- 4.3.14 The proposal accords with Policy D3 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Highways and Parking

- 4.3.15 The proposal would not impact existing access or parking arrangements on site and therefore complies with Policy T2 of the NHLP.

Environmental Implications

- 4.3.16 Policy D1 of the NHLP outlines the Council's commitment to supporting climate change mitigation through the requirement for schemes to incorporate the principles of 'sustainable design'. Examples of sustainable design under Policy D1 include incorporating sustainable drainage. Policy D1 is broadly consistent with the aims of Section 14 of the NPPF.
- 4.3.17 The proposed landscaping would not impact the existing drainage channel. There are no other environmental implications as a result of the proposed development.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 4.3.18 This is a form of development which is exempt from BNG Legislation, defined under article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 due it falling under the scope of the 'de minimis' exemption.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 In the absence of material planning reasons to the contrary it is my view that planning permission is **GRANTED**.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None.

4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 None.

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 residential gym/office hereby permitted shall not be used other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwellinghouse known as Thistley View.

Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of both Thistley View and neighbouring dwellings in accordance with Policy D3 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

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  Shaun Greaves Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 10 March 2026	