

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Andrew Hunter.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/00723/FPH	First floor front extension including dormer window. Front entrance canopy. Single storey rear extension linking existing garage and dwelling. Alterations to garage to include insertion of rooflights and window following removal of existing garage doors to facilitate garage conversion.	The Lodge Preston Road Gosmore Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 7QR

Submitted Plan Nos

EVN148_01B - EVN148_OS EVN148_02 EVN148_03 EVN148_04D EVN148_05C EVN148_06C
EVN148_BP_Rev-A

1.0 Policies

D1	Sustainable design
D2	House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild
D3	Protecting living conditions
HE1	Designated heritage assets
NE4	Biodiversity and geological sites
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN13	Protecting Green Belt Land
SECN15	Conserve + enhance natural environment
SECN16	Conserve + enhance historic environment
SECN9	Promoting sustainable transport
SP13	Historic environment
SP12	Green infrastructure, landscape and biod

SP5	Countryside and Green Belt
SP6	Sustainable transport
SP9	Design and Sustainability
T2	Parking

2.0 **Relevant site history**

2.1 84/01576/1 - Erection of two storey side extension – Approved 08/11/84.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Parish Council** – No objection.

3.1 **Ecologist** - I've read through the bat emergence survey report for The Lodge and note bats were confirmed emerging from the brickwork of the building. I also note that the applicant is currently only intending to undertake works to the garage which has a low potential for bat interest.

Given this I would have no objection to the proposal.

However, as this application also covers the broader works to the building there is a potential that during execution of the remainder of the works in the future that bats could be impacted.

As such I advise the following condition is added to any permission granted;

Works impacting areas identified of bat interest shall be undertaken in accordance with the details contained in the August 2025 Bat Emergence report as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The site is a two storey detached dwelling with a pitched roof. The site is in an area of predominantly rural character, with a small number of dwellings nearby. The site is within the Green Belt. A building to the south is listed.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 The application is for a first floor front extension with a pitched roof including dormer, a single storey rear extension with a flat roof, and the conversion of a single garage to a habitable room with associated external alterations. The number of bedrooms would be increased from three to four.

4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key material considerations are whether the development is acceptable in principle, design, neighbour amenity, parking, and ecology.

Principle

- 4.3.2 The site is in the Green Belt in the adopted Local Plan. Whether developments in the Green Belt are acceptable in principle will depend on whether they comply with the NPPF and Policy SP5 of the Local Plan, and if there are any other material considerations relevant.

- 4.3.3 The NPPF in paragraphs 154 and 155 sets out what development is not inappropriate in the Green Belt, with the relevant parts of those paragraphs stating:

154. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

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;

- 4.3.4 In assessing the proposal against the above criteria, the proposed garage conversion and associated external alterations would not enlarge the building, and would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 4.3.5 The other proposed works would enlarge the building. The present dwelling is not original, having been extended to its NW following planning permission 84/01576/1. Only the ground floor of this scheme has been added, which has enlarged the dwelling by approx. 18.4 sqm from its original floor space of 117 sqm, an increase of 15.7%.
- 4.3.6 The extensions now proposed would have a total floor space of approx. 38.9 sqm, which cumulatively with the previous extension would be an increase in floor space of 57.3 sqm and 48.9%.
- 4.3.7 The proposed extensions individually and cumulatively with the previous extension are not considered disproportionate additions in floor space and overall size. The proposal would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, and is considered acceptable in principle. The proposal complies with Policy SP5 of the Local Plan, and Section 13 of the NPPF.

Design

- 4.3.8 The proposed extensions are individually small in size and scale relative to the host dwelling, are considered to be of a design in keeping with its character and appearance, and will not appear cumulatively as significant enlargements due to the siting and design of the extensions. The garage conversion will have limited impacts on the dwelling and is acceptable.
- 4.3.9 The garage conversion and rear extension will be of a small scale and will not harm the character and appearance of the locality, including the setting and significance of the listed building to the south.
- 4.3.10 The first floor extension will be more visible, however it will be oriented away from the public highway Preston Road to the east and will not be harmful to public views. The extension will be more visible from a private access road to the west, however it's not considered that the impacts would be significantly greater than those of the existing two storey part of the dwelling which is only slightly further back from the front of the site. The impacts of the first floor extension on the locality and the setting and significance of the listed building are acceptable. The proposals are of an acceptable design. The proposal complies with Policies D1, D2 and HE1 of the Local Plan, and Sections 12 and 16 of the NPPF.

Neighbour amenity

- 4.3.11 The proposed first floor extension would not be near any other dwellings and will not be harmful. The single storey rear extension would be small and obscured from the closest dwelling to the south by an outbuilding in the site. The garage conversion will not be harmful as it will not enlarge the garage and the new openings will not cause harmful loss of privacy. Impacts on amenity are acceptable, and the proposal complies with Policy D3 of the Local Plan.

Parking

- 4.3.12 The number of bedrooms would be increased from three to four. The site would have parking provision for two cars, which is acceptable. The proposal complies with Policy T2 of the Local Plan.

Ecology

- 4.3.13 The Council's Ecologist stated that a preliminary bat survey and a follow-up emergence survey were needed due to the location of the site and aspects of the construction of the building.
- 4.3.14 The emergence survey found bats emerging from the brickwork of the building, although the proposed works to the garage of the site are of low potential for bat interest. The Ecologist does not have objections to the proposal, and recommends a condition relating to works impacting areas identified of bat interest from the emergence survey, which is considered reasonable and acceptable. The proposal is considered acceptable with regard to ecology. The proposal complies with Policy NE4 of the Local Plan and Section 15 of the NPPF.

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**.

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 extension(s) hereby permitted shall be built in external materials to match the existing dwellinghouse unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA.

Reason: To protect the visual amenities of the locality and to comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

4. Works impacting areas identified of bat interest shall be undertaken in accordance with the details contained in the August 2025 Bat Emergence report as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

Reason: In the interests of protected species and ecology. To comply with Policy NE4 of the Local Plan.

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.

Informative/s:

1. The applicant is reminded that, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to: deliberately capture, disturb, injure, or kill bats; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; obstruct access to their resting or sheltering places; intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it's in a structure or place of shelter or protection. Planning consent for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under these acts. It is the legal responsibility of the contractor to check for bats, should bats be found at any stages of the development works, then all works should cease, and Natural England should be contacted for advice.

Signed  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 11 August 2025	