

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/01119/FPH	Alterations to existing detached garage fenestration including removal of existing garage doors to facilitate conversion of garage into habitable accommodation.	27 Bessemer Close Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 1AG

Submitted Plan Nos

Location Plan HM-26672-01 HM-26672-03

1.0 Policies

D1	Sustainable design
D2	House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild

D3 Protecting living conditions

T2 Parking

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 24/01755/LDCP - Replacement of rear west elevation fenestrations and insertion of 2no roof lights to existing single storey roof slope. Granted 19.09.2024.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 Neighbour notification carried out.

3.2 Two comments received neither objecting nor supporting.

3.3 The full comments can be viewed on the public file. In summary the comments note:

- ❑ *require clarification on whether any rear-facing windows, rooflights, glazed doors, or other forms of fenestration are proposed for the rear elevation or rear roof slope.*
- ❑ *if no rear-facing fenestration is proposed, no objection to the application.*
- ❑ *if any rear-facing openings are proposed, object due to the potential for direct overlooking and a loss of privacy to property.*
- ❑ *the application drawing is not clear on the proposed opening and the written submission does not refer to it at all.*
- ❑ *if approved, request a condition removing permitted development rights for any future rear-facing windows, rooflights, or glazed openings.*

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 No 27 is a detached dwelling sited to the rear of Bessemer Close, accessed via a long driveway from Bessemer Close. The applicant has confirmed that no 27 are the sole owners of the driveway, also used to access no 26.

4.1.2 The site is bounded to the north and east by the rear gardens of nos 28, 29, 35-39 Bessemer Close, and to the south by nos 25 and 26 Bessemer Close. It is bounded to the west by Hitchin Football Club.

- 4.1.3 The detached double garage sits forward of the dwelling in the front drive, bounded by the rear gardens of nos 28, 36 and 37 Bessemer Close. The house and garage are of brick and tile construction with some render on the dwelling.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Consent is sought for:

“Alterations to existing detached garage fenestration including removal of existing garage doors to facilitate conversion of garage into habitable accommodation.”

- 4.2.2 It is proposed to replace the existing two garage doors with windows and infill with brickwork to match existing. A new side door and window are proposed on the west elevation. A roof light is proposed in the north facing roofslope.

- 4.2.3 The proposal seeks to convert the garage in to habitable accommodation and is proposed to be used as a gym with a shower room.

4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key material considerations when assessing the planning merits of the proposal are:

- ☐ design and appearance.
- ☐ potential impact on neighbour amenity.
- ☐ Access, highways and parking.

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.
- 4.3.3 Policy D2 of the Local Plan requires extensions to houses 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 (NPPF).
- 4.3.4 The detached garage is not visible from the main route of Bessemer Close being accessed via a long driveway and set back from the main street. The proposed alterations are modest and relate adequately to the garage, the host dwelling and the neighbouring properties. Brick infilling will match existing materials with white upvc doors and windows to match existing.
- 4.3.5 The proposal is acceptable in design terms.

Impact on Neighbour Amenity

- 4.3.6 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 NPPF.

- 4.3.7 The garage sits on the boundary with several properties. The proposed alterations will not result in any change to the bulk, mass, siting or height of the existing structure.
- 4.3.8 The alterations are proposed to enable the use of the garage for habitable accommodation. The proposed use as a gym is acceptable as habitable accommodation. The existing garage falls within the domestic curtilage of the dwelling house. Use for domestic purposes is acceptable and will not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.
- 4.3.9 Comments received regarding alteration to openings on the elevations facing towards neighbouring properties is noted. To clarify, no alterations to openings are proposed on areas of elevations facing towards neighbouring properties.
- 4.3.10 A roof light is proposed in the north facing roofslope, facing towards nos 36 and 37 Bessemer Close. As a rooflight, this will not give rise to any overlooking or loss of privacy.
- 4.3.11 Given the proximity of the garage to the neighbouring properties, it is considered reasonable to control the opening of the rooflight to non opening to prevent potential noise disturbance to neighbouring occupiers.
- 4.3.12 It is not necessary to restrict permitted development rights. The garage sits forward of the front elevation of the main dwelling, and does not therefore have permitted development rights for alterations to openings.
- 4.3.13 It is considered that the comments raised by neighbouring occupiers have been addressed above.
- 4.3.14 No unacceptable harm will arise to neighbouring amenity.

Parking and Access

- 4.3.15 The proposal does not generate the need for additional parking but will result in the loss of the existing garage. However there is adequate space to park on the driveway and on street parking provision.

4.4 Conclusion

- 4.4.1 Acceptable.

4.5 Alternative Options

- 4.5.1 None applicable

4.6 Pre-Commencement Conditions

- 4.6.1 n/a.

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. The rooflight on the north facing roofslope of the garage building shall be non opening and retained as such unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the occupiers of the adjacent dwellings and to comply with Policy D3 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

5. The conversion of the garage into habitable accommodation hereby permitted shall not be used as an annexe to 27 Bessemer Close.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the occupiers of the adjacent dwellings and to comply with Policy D3 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 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: 22 July 2026	