

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...William Thompson.....

**APPLICATION
REFERENCE**

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF
DEVELOPMENT**

APPLICATION SITE

26/01338/FP

Installation of external cladding
following removal of existing wall tiles
on the front and rear elevations

1-9 Firs Close
Hitchin
Hertfordshire

Submitted Plan Nos

Location Plan Site Plan

1.0 Policies

D1 Sustainable design

D3	Protecting living conditions
T2	Parking
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN14	Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding

1.0 **Relevant Policies**

National Planning Policy Framework 2026

Section 5 – Meeting the challenge of climate change

Section 14 – Achieving well-designed places

North Hertfordshire Draft Local Plan 2011-2031

Policy T2 – Parking

Policy D1 – Sustainable design

Policy D2 – House extensions, replacement dwellings and outbuildings

Policy D3 – Protecting living conditions

2.0 **Relevant Site History**

2.1 None relevant

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Neighbour Consultation** – None received

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 Site and Surroundings

4.1.1 The application site accommodates two sets of three-storey terraced dwellings situated on Firs Close, Hitchin.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Installation of external cladding following removal of existing wall tiles on the front and rear elevations.

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 impact on the character and appearance of the area.
- The impact of the proposed development on the living conditions of neighbouring properties.
- Access and parking matters.
- The impact of the proposed development on the environment.

Design and Appearance:

- 4.3.2 Policy D1 of the Local Plan requires that development proposals respond positively to the site's local context. This is broadly consistent with Section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.3.3 The proposed change in external material from hanging tile to 'Cobblestone' colour Hardie Plank cladding would be consistent across both sets of terraces. The chosen colour is similar to existing and the design would maintain the existing impression of horizontal lines.
- 4.3.4 In my view, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in design terms and would, therefore, not cause harm to the character and appearance of the dwellings or streetscene. The proposal is considered to comply with Policy D1 of the NHLP and Section 14 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties:

- 4.3.5 A core planning principle set out in the NPPF is to always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. This principle is reflected in the provisions of Policy D3 of the NHLP.
- 4.3.6 Regarding neighbour amenity, the proposal would not increase the existing built form or alter existing fenestration. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would not result in an unacceptable level of harm to amenity, as to be objectionable, in terms of overdominance, shading or loss of privacy.
- 4.3.7 This development is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy D3 of the NHLP and Section 14 of the NPPF.

Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.8 The development would not affect on-site parking. Each dwelling complies with Policy T2 of the NHLP. No parking issues would arise from this application.

Environmental Implications

- 4.3.9 The proposed development is not large enough in scale to cause significant implications for the local environment in terms of carbon emissions and therefore would be generally in compliance with Section 19 of the NPPF.

Biodiversity Net Gain:

- 4.3.10 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 N/A

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.

Biodiversity Net Gain

1. This development is not subject to the statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan condition because it is considered exempt under the statutory exemptions (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>) or transitional arrangements in respect of the biodiversity gain condition.

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: 28 August 2026	