

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/00424/FPH	Erection of four bay cartlodge with habitable accommodation at first floor and external staircase following demolition of existing stables and store.	Larch House Old Knebworth Lane Knebworth Hertfordshire SG3 6FS

Submitted Plan Nos

8411-P11 8411-P12 8411-P10 8411-P13 8411-P14 8411-P15

SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN13	Protecting Green Belt Land
SECN14	Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding
SECN16	Conserve + enhance historic environment
SP5	Countryside and Green Belt
SP9	Design and Sustainability
SP13	Historic environment
D1	Sustainable design
D2	House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild
D3	Protecting living conditions
HE1	Designated heritage assets
T2	Parking

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 **89/00337/1:** Side and rear two storey extension with double garage following demolition of existing garage. **Conditional Permission.**

2.2 **81/00343/1:** Erection of a block of 5 stables and tack room. **Conditional Permission.**

2.3 **79/00074/1:** Erection of two storey extension. **Conditional Permission.**

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Neighbour Consultation** – No comments received.

3.2 **Knebworth Parish Council** – No comments received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The application site accommodates a detached dwelling and old stable block/store, situated on Old Knebworth Lane, Knebworth. The site benefits from a large curtilage with no immediate neighbours and is highly screened from the street view by existing boundary treatments and the drive way.
- 4.1.2 The site is within the Old Knebworth Conservation Area and is brushed over by the Green Belt.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Erection of four bay cartlodge with habitable accommodation at first floor and external staircase following demolition of existing stables and store.

4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are as follows:

- Impact on the Green Belt;
- Design and impact on local character;
- Impact on the historic environment;
- Impact on neighbour amenity;
- Highways and parking matters;
- Impact on the environment;
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

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.

- 4.3.3 It is established by case law that a detached structure can be consider an extension to a building, providing that the building is within domestic curtilage. While the land was previously divided (as shown on the location plan for application 81/00343/1), the stable block and associated paddock has been re-integrated since. While the date of this is unclear, Google Map imagery shows the stable block area being integrated with the wider driveway, and used for the parking of cars, since the early 2000s. The applicant has clarified that the current use of the stable block is for domestic storage, as per the use of the block by the previous owners. I am therefore satisfied that the stable block is

used for domestic purposes in conjunction with the main dwelling, and has been for at least 10 years, meaning that the building can be considered as domestic curtilage.

- 4.3.3 The existing outbuilding has a footprint of 160 sqm. The proposed cartlodge, which would replace this building, would have a footprint of 90 sqm. While the introduction of a first-floor level office would increase the gross internal area by approximately 15%, the development would be contained to this smaller footprint. On balance, it is therefore considered that the proposed cartlodge would not constitute a disproportionate addition.
- 4.3.4 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 reduce the footprint of the existing built form. 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 – see above;

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 be sited in the same location as the existing stable block/store, would constitute a significant reduction in footprint, and would be grouped with existing development within the site. While the new structure would be taller than existing, the reduction in footprint and design of the structure would reduce the visual bulk and massing of the development. Therefore, the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on openness.

- 4.3.5 Overall, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable within the Green Belt in accordance with Policy SP5 of the NHLP and Section 13 of the NPPF.

Design and Impact on Local Character

- 4.3.6 Policies D1 and D2 of the NHLP require that development proposals respond positively to the site’s local context. Policy D1 is broadly consistent with paragraph 135 of the NPPF.

- 4.3.7 The proposed 4no. bay carport with first floor habitable accommodation (home office/ games room) would replace the existing old stable block/store to the eastern corner of the front curtilage. The proposed structure would measure 13m in width and 6.3m in depth. The structure would have a dual-pitched roof measuring 3m to the eaves and 6.38m to the ridge. 2no. dormer windows and 1no roof light would feature to the west elevation, which faces the front drive. An external timber staircase would feature to the northern gable end. The roof would be finished in clay pantiles to match the main dwelling, and dark timber boarding to the main structure. All windows and doors would be constructed of timber and finished in green.
- 4.3.8 In comparison with the existing structure, the proposed carport would be considerably taller. However, the significant reduction in footprint, and containing the habitable accommodation to the roof area, would reduce the visual massing of the structure considerably. Furthermore, the use of materials would be sympathetic to the rural character of the site while incorporating elements of the main dwelling for visual cohesion. Views of the structure would be minimal from the street due to existing boundary treatments and the building being well set back from the site entrance.
- 4.3.9 The proposal is therefore considered to be of an acceptable scale, siting and design for the locality and accords with Policy D1 of the NHLP, as well as paragraph 135 of Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Impact on the Historic Environment

- 4.3.10 Policy HE1 emphasises how permission will be refused where proposals would cause substantial harm or a loss of significance to a Heritage Asset - in this case, the Old Knebworth Conservation Area - and permission should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal is necessary to deliver considerable public benefits to outweigh this harm or loss. Policy SP13 emphasises how great weight will be given to the potential harms to the significance of heritage assets, seeking their conservation and management of their setting. These policies comply with the LPA's statutory duty under s.72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and are broadly commensurate with Section 16 of the NPPF.
- 4.3.11 As outlined by the Old Knebworth Conservation Area Character Statement (2011), the significance of the Conservation Area lies within its rural character, with notable features including timber framed barns. The proposal would be largely screened from public view. Notwithstanding this, the proposed timber framed car port would retain the rural character of the site through its scale and siting, with the inclusion of timber boarding and features being sympathetic to the existing character of the Conservation Area. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on the significance of the Old Knebworth Conservation Area.
- 4.3.12 Regarding the impact upon the historic environment, the proposed development accords with the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policies SP13 and HE1 of the Local Plan, and Section 16 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbours

- 4.3.13 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.
- 4.3.14 The site is well distanced from neighbouring residential properties. Therefore, the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on existing residential amenity and therefore accords with Policy D3 of the NHLP and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Highways and Parking

- 4.3.15 The proposal would not impact existing access arrangements or the no. of parking spaces on site/ the proposal is therefore commensurate 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'; with which the proposal is commensurate with. Policy D1 is broadly consistent with the aims of Section 14 of the NPPF. There are no other environmental implications as a result of the proposed development.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 4.3.15 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 carport with first floor habitable accommodation hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes incidental to the residential use of the dwellinghouse known as Larch House (Larch How).

Reason: To avoid the creation of a new dwelling contrary to the planning policies applicable to the area and to avoid the occupation of two separate dwellings by persons unconnected with each other as this would result in an unsatisfactory

relationship and inadequate standard of amenity for both properties 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  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 28 April 2026	