

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Thomas Howe.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/00788/FPH	Installation of front hardstanding. (Amended plan received 14/05/26).	4 The Avenue Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9RQ

Submitted Plan Nos

SKK3059/001 SKK3059/101 SKK3059/102 C

1.0 Policies

D1	Sustainable design
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D3	Protecting living conditions
HE1	Designated heritage assets
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN14	Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding
SECN16	Conserve + enhance historic environment

2.0 **Site History**

- 2.1 24/00597/FPH - Alterations to existing detached rear outbuilding to include side extension, replacement roof and alterations to fenestration to form home office. – Conditional Permission
- 2.2 22/02808/FPH - Installation of solar panels to existing side elevation roofslope following relocation of existing rooflight to west side of existing pitched roof. – Conditional Permission
- 2.3 20/00398/FPH - Single storey rear extension - Conditional Permission
- 2.4 18/03036/FPH - Replacement front boundary wall. Replacement windows and other external alterations. – Conditional Permission

3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 **Neighbour Representations** – None Received.
- 3.2 **Conservation Officer** – No Comment. Agree to allow DM to make determination.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 No. 4 comprises a detached two storey dwelling off The Avenue, a residential road in Hitchin. The site is in the Hitchin Conservation Area and Article 4 Area.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Planning Permission is sought for:

Installation of replacement front hardstanding.

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 resultant impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on the living conditions of neighbouring properties.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on car parking provision in the area.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on the environment.

Design and Appearance and Impact Upon Conservation Area:

- 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. Policy D2 of the Local Plan requires developments 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. 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 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. This policy is broadly consistent with Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) act 1990 emphasises that development should seek to the preservation or enhancement of the Conservation Area.

- 4.3.3 The proposed replacement of the concrete driveway with tumbled limestone setts would materially alter the appearance of the dwelling as viewed within the street scene. Given the similarity in colours, it is not considered that this change would be adverse. The proposed layout of the setts, in a herringbone layout is considered to result in an enhancement of the dwelling within the street scene and the wider conservation area. The front driveway would predominantly be paved, with a modest path of grass being retained to the boundary wall. This is considered to be acceptable and would not appear out of place in the locality given the variety of driveways and front garden types within the surrounding area. This is not considered to run contrary with the Character Statement for the Conservation Area given the retention of this green space and the

enhancement of paving to the front garden area. The Conservation Officer has not objected, and was satisfied with development management making the final determination.

- 4.3.4 The proposed development is therefore considered to be in compliance with Policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan and the core principles set out within Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The potential impacts to the surrounding Conservation Area are considered to be acceptable, and the significance of this heritage asset will not be unacceptably harmed. Policies HE1 and SP13 of the Local Plan 2011-2031 and Section 16 of the NPPF are considered to be complied with. The development is considered to comply with Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) act 1990. The design and appearance are therefore acceptable.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties:

- 4.3.5 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 National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.3.6 The development would not result in a change in levels and would therefore not be adverse to the amenities that neighbour presently benefit from. No objections were received.
- 4.3.7 Given the above, it is considered that the proposed development would result in no unacceptable detrimental impact upon neighbouring occupiers and is therefore compliant with Policy D3 of the local plan and the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.8 The proposed development would be served by a minimum of two parking spaces that are off-street, therefore impacts to parking provision locally would not be harmful. No change to access would arrangements would occur, and therefore, impacts to the safe operation of the highway are unlikely to occur.

Environmental Implications:

- 4.3.9 The proposed development, by virtue of its limited scale in general terms together with the sustainable location would have no significant implications for the local environment in terms of carbon emissions and therefore would be generally in compliance with Section 14 of the NPPF. It is noted that the development would not benefit from drainage within the plot, however, the driveway would benefit from a permeable membrane and would allow for water to percolate into the ground, providing a degree of improvement over the existing concrete driveway, whereby it outputs water onto the road and pavement out into the storm drain. This is considered to provide an improvement compared to the existing arrangement.

Biodiversity Net Gain:

4.3.10 This is a householder application which is exempt from BNG Legislation defined under article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

4.4 **Conclusion**

4.4.1 The proposed development is considered acceptable and is considered to comply with the necessary provisions of the Local Plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework. Grant conditional permission.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

4.5.1 None applicable.

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.

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: 15 May 2026	