

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Vicki Wood.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/02848/FPH	Infill extension to create enclosed link between main dwelling and garage and insertion of additional fenestration to facilitate garage conversion. Extension of existing 1.8m high boundary fence line along east boundary up to front elevation of existing garage (as amended by plans received on 27/01/2025 and 25/02/2025).	58 Downlands Royston Hertfordshire SG8 5BY

Submitted Plan Nos

Location Plan BAR/24/01A BAR/24/02C

1.0 Policies

1.0 **Local and National Policy**

1.1 **National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF)**

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Section 14 - Meeting the challenges of climate change, flooding and coastal change

1.2 **North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (NHLP)**

Strategic Policies

Policy SP1 – Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire

Policy SP9 – Design and Sustainability

Development Management Policies

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.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Neighbour Consultation** – One objection has been received from 56 Downlands and raises the following concerns:

- ☐ Windows on the east elevation of the garage will overlook their property and result in a loss of privacy to both the dwelling and front garden.

3.2 **Royston Town Council** – No objection.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The application site comprises of a two-storey, detached residential dwelling with attached double garage sited to the front of the property. Properties to either side are of a similar design with similar footprint.

4.1.2 The application site is within the settlement boundary for Royston where development is generally acceptable subject to policy requirements.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Infill extension to create enclosed link between main dwelling and garage and insertion of additional fenestration to facilitate garage conversion. Extension of existing 1.8m

high boundary fence line along east boundary up to front elevation of existing garage (as amended by plans received on 27/01/2025 and 25/02/2025).

- 4.2.2 The amended plans introduce an extension of the existing 1.8m high boundary fence line along the east boundary up to the front elevation of the existing garage and also obscure glazes the top sections of the windows and thereby addresses the concerns raised by the no.56 Downlands in terms of overlooking and loss of privacy.

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 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:

- 4.3.2 The objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include those seeking to secure the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places (Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places). Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that “*Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities*”. In this regard, Policy D1 and D2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan are consistent with the objectives set out within the NPPF.

- 4.3.3 The development would involve infilling an existing walkway which is located between the front of the dwelling and the rear of the garages to form additional habitable accommodation in the form of a day room and bedroom as part of a garage conversion. An additional window opening would be formed in the west elevation and two new window openings in the east elevation. Following an objection from the neighbouring property to the east no.56 Downlands, the application has been amended to extend the existing 1.8 metre high boundary fence line to just short of the front elevation of the existing garage and obscure glazes the fixed top section of both window openings. There are no proposed changes to the front elevation where the existing garage doors would remain. Materials would match those of the existing dwelling. Access to the rear garden would remain via a re-positioned gate to the east side of the dwelling. There would be no harm to the streetscene given the minor scale of the development and is acceptable.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties:

- 4.3.4 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.
- 4.3.5 The addition of a second window opening to the west elevation of the proposed development would not result in any harm to the existing residential amenity of the neighbouring property no.60 Downlands due to the separation distance of existing gardens and established planting. The east side elevation of the existing garage wall is devoid of any openings and the proposal would see the introduction of two new

window openings which would face directly onto the front garden/paved area with views, in part, into a habitable room of the neighbouring property no.56 Downlands. Given the proximity of these windows to the dwelling there would, in my view, be a loss of privacy to the occupants as a result of the development. In order to address this issue, the proposed plans have been amended to extend the existing 1.8m high boundary fence line and obscure and fix the top section of both windows which in my view addresses the concerns raised. No further objections have been received in terms of the amended plans received on 27th January with plans received on the 25th February seeking to improve the issues even further. In light of the amended plans, I am satisfied that there would be no significant impact to the existing residential amenity of no.56 Downlands and is acceptable.

Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.6 The proposed development would result in the addition of one bedroom to the property. The site benefits from sufficient off-street car parking able to accommodate at least two cars and is therefore policy compliant.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 4.3.7 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.

Environmental Implications:

- 4.3.8 Section 14 of the NPPF sets out how the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future. The principles set out in Section 14 are reflected in Policy D1 of the North Herts Local Plan, which sets out that development proposal should take all reasonable opportunities to reduce energy consumption and waste, retain existing vegetation and propose new appropriate planting, and future proof for changes in technology and lifestyle.
- 4.3.9 The proposed development, 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 and Policy D1.

4.4 Conclusion

- 4.4.1 The proposed development is considered acceptable and in accordance with Policies SP1, SP9, D1, D2 and D3 of the NHLP 2011-2031 and Sections 2, 12 and 14 of the NPPF 2024.

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.

3. The development hereby permitted shall be built in external materials to match the existing dwellinghouse unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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. Prior to the occupation of the development, the windows on the east elevation of the development hereby permitted shall be permanently fixed closed and glazed with obscure glass to the sections which exceed the height of the 1.8 metre high boundary fence line.

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

5. Prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved, a 1.8 metre high boundary fence shall be installed to the east side party boundary as shown on plan BAR/24/02C. The fence shall remain in place permanently unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the privacy of the occupiers of the adjacent dwelling 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. The Council acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. 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  Sam Dicocco	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 25 February 2025	