

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/01053/FP	Installation of shopfront. (Amended plans received 03/06/25).	4 - 5 Bancroft Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 1LH

Submitted Plan Nos

24085-L100 24085-PE101 24085-PE102 24085-E101 24085-E102 24085-P101A 24085-P102A

1.0 Policies

D1	Sustainable design
D3	Protecting living conditions
HE1	Designated heritage assets
T1	Assessment of transport matters
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN16	Conserve + enhance historic environment

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 Various applications.

2.2 24/02806/FP - Installation of shopfront (Development already carried out) – refused

2.3 24/02807/LBC - Installation of shopfront and internal alterations (Development already carried out). - Refused

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Conservation Officer** – No Objection.

“The proposal reinstates a more traditional shopfront appearance in line with the character of the listed building and that of this part of Hitchin conservation area. It should be suggested that the stall riser is increased in height (depth) to match that of number improving the overall proportions of this shop front and thereby enhancing and the character of the listed building and Hitchin conservation area.”

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 No. 4-5 comprises a ground floor unit off Bancroft, Hitchin. The site is within the Primary Shopping Frontage of Hitchin and the Conservation Area. It is Listed, and its list entry reads as follows:

C19 and modern drastic alteration of C15 building. Modern ground floor shops, plaster faced first floor, tiled roof with C19 horsman figurine at east end of ridge copted from original, 4 casements. RCHM p 123; VCH pp 3-4.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Planning permission is sought for the replacement of the shop front.

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 of the proposed development upon the Listed Building and 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 to 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 extensions to houses and the erection or replacement of buildings to incorporate design that is sympathetic to the main building in terms of its scale, form and orientation and does not harm the character and appearance of the locality around the site. Policy HE1 encourages development to secure the significance of heritage assets. These policies are broadly consistent with Sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.3.3 The Conservation Officer has not objected to the proposed development, but recommended an increase in the height of the stall riser. The amended plans reflect this, and meet the request to match the height of the riser to the neighbouring unit. The appearance would comprise a traditional shop front, a better design cue compared to the existing frontage, of particular note given that the site is within the conservation area. Overall, the design would be acceptable and would comprise an improvement to the appearance of the unit and the wider conservation area.
- 4.3.4 The proposed development is therefore considered to be in compliance with Policies HE1, D1 and D2 of the Local Plan and the core principles set out within Sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework. 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 proposed development would not enlarge the bulk of the frontage, and would not allow for new vantage points into neighbouring properties. Therefore, light, dominance and privacy impacts are not considered to be harmful. No neighbour 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.

Environmental Implications:

- 4.3.8 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.

Biodiversity:

- 4.3.9 The proposal is considered to fall within the 'de minimis' exemption for biodiversity net gain. Therefore, the proposal is not required to demonstrate 10% of biodiversity net gain. I do not consider it is suitable or possible to require BNG as required by NE4 given that the proposal relates to a shop front.

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.

3. The development hereby permitted shall be completed within 8 months from the date of this permission, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interest of local character and to preserve the setting of nearby Heritage Assets, to comply with Policy HE1 of the Local Plan 2011-2031.

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. 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  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 4 June 2025	