

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Henry Thomas.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/02013/FPH	Two storey rear/side extension following removal of existing single storey rear/side extension. Two storey infill extension to link dwelling to existing detached garage, replace garage door with window and first floor extension over existing garage and first floor extension over existing side extension, to facilitate creation of 2-bedroom ancillary self-contained annex, while retaining a 5-bedroom dwelling.	Dalkeith Pottersheath Road Pottersheath Welwyn Hertfordshire AL6 9ST

Submitted Plan Nos

PL01 PL02 PL03 PL04 PL05 PL06 PL07 PL08 PL09 PL10 PL11 PL12

1.0 Policies

D1	Sustainable design
D2	House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild
D3	Protecting living conditions
SP1	Sustainable development in North Herts
SP9	Design and Sustainability
SP5	Countryside and Green Belt
HS6	Relatives and dependents accommodation
T2	Parking
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN13	Protecting Green Belt Land
SECN14	Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding

2.0 **Relevant Site History**

2.1 02/00993/1HH - First floor extension to existing garage

Refused.

2.2 89/00927/1 - Two storey side extension and garage (detached).

Conditional Permission.

2.3 87/01727/1 - Erection of two storey rear extension. (As amended by plans received on 18th Feb & 2 March 1988)

Conditional Permission.

2.4 83/00593/1 - Erection of two and single storey extensions, replacement double garage with formation of new vehicular access and closure of existing access.

Conditional Permission.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Site Notice and Neighbour Consultation** – None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The application site is a detached two storey dwelling on the south side of Pottersheath Road. The site is located outside the settlement boundary for Knebworth, within the Green Belt. The application site is within a defined streetscene with development on both sides of the road. Dwellings served by Fallow End are located to the rear of the site.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Two storey rear/side extension following removal of existing single storey rear/side extension. Two storey infill extension to link dwelling to existing detached garage, replace garage door with window and first floor extension over existing garage and first floor extension over existing side extension, to facilitate creation of 2-bedroom ancillary self-contained annex, while retaining a 5-bedroom dwelling.

4.2.2 The rear / side extension would be approx. 12.3m in depth, 4.45m with a hipped roof, 5.1m to eaves and 7.05m to ridge.

4.2.3 The link extension would infill the gap between the dwelling and the garage whilst adding a first floor above the garage.

4.2.4 The proposed materials are:

Walls – Match existing (brick)

Roof – Match existing (tiles)

Windows – Match existing (uPVC)

Doors – Match existing (uPVC)

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.
- The impact of the proposed development on the Green Belt.

Principle – Green Belt

4.3.2 The site is in the Green Belt. Policy SP5 of the Local Plan states that the Council will only permit development proposals in the Green Belt where they would not result in inappropriate development or where very special circumstances have been demonstrated. Policy SP5 refers to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which sets out exceptions to inappropriate development in the Green Belt in paragraphs 154 and 155 (December 2024 version). Para. 154 is:

154. Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies:

a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;

b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;

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;

d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;

e) limited infilling in villages;

f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and

g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:

- i. mineral extraction;*
- ii. engineering operations;*
- iii. local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;*
- iv. the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;*
- v. material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and*
- vi. development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.*

4.3.3 From the planning history, it is evident that the dwelling has been substantially enlarged from its original form. In my opinion the original dwelling has already been inappropriately extended for the context of greenbelt and therefore this proposal is inappropriate in principle as presented.

4.3.4 Para. 155 states that housing, commercial and other development should not be regarded as inappropriate development where:

- a. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;*
- b. There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed;*
- c. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework(57); and*
- d. Where applicable the development proposed meets the 'Golden Rules' requirements set out in paragraphs 156 – 157.*

4.3.5 'Grey belt' is defined in the NPPF Glossary as:

Grey belt: *For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, 'grey belt' is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143. 'Grey belt' excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.*

The relevant parts referred to above in para. 143 are:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*

b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

- 4.3.6 In respect of para. 143 referred to in the definition, a) is not applicable as Pottersheath is not considered to be a large built up area, it would not conflict with b) as Pottersheath is not a town and the site is sufficiently far from the nearest towns Stevenage and Welwyn Garden City, and d) is not applicable either as Pottersheath is not a town. The proposal therefore complies with a) of para 154.
- 4.3.7 The agent has stated that the development is required to provide care for elderly parents. I therefore consider that there is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed and therefore complies with b. of 155.
- 4.3.8 Part d. of 155 is not applicable to the proposed development.
- 4.3.9 Part c. of 155 considers whether the development would be in a sustainable location. It is acknowledged that occupants would be largely reliant on the private car as the site is rural with no public transport, shops or services nearby, and narrow rural roads with no footpaths/bike lanes will reduce the likelihood of such non-car movement. Such situations are however common in rural areas, and are referenced in para. 110. The site can be considered sufficiently sustainable as it's close to a public highway and sited between an existing group of dwellings, traffic generation would be minimal, with safe access onto the highway. The development is not considered to conflict with 155 c.
- 4.3.10 The last part of the definition states '*Grey belt*' excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development. Footnote 7 states:
- 7 The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 189) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, a National Landscape, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.*
- 4.3.11 The proposed development is not considered to be on land referred to in footnote 7. The site would be sufficiently set away from any designated Heritage Assets. This would not provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development as referred to under footnote 7 for the definition of Grey Belt.
- 4.3.12 The proposal is considered to comply with para. 155 of the NPPF, and would not be inappropriate development. The proposal is acceptable in principle, and complies with Policy SP5 of the Local Plan and Section 13 of the NPPF.

Principle of Development - Annexe

4.3.13 Policy HS6 stated that accommodation formed by the adaption or extension of the main dwelling will be permitted provided that:

- a) a genuine need for the accommodation is demonstrated;*
- b) the annex is subordinate to the main dwelling and designed in such a way that it can be easily (re-)incorporated into the main house if use as an annex ceases;*
- c) any development would not exceed the size of extensions that would otherwise normally be acceptable; and*
- d) the occupation of the accommodation is restricted by condition.*

4.3.14 The agent has stated that the accommodation is required to care for elderly parents. Although they would constitute a sizeable extension with a lack of internal integration, I would consider that the dwelling would retain its appearance as a single plot, with one frontage and one rear garden. In any case, the suggested annexe condition will ensure the retention of the dwelling as a single plot. I consider that the annexe could be easily re-incorporated into the host dwelling and therefore would comply with Policy HS6 of the Local Plan.

Design and Appearance:

4.3.15 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 and beautiful 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 communities*”. In this regard, Policy D1 and D2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan are consistent with the objectives set out within the NPPF.

4.3.16 The officer’s report for **02/00993/1HH** stated that:

The main issue here is the proximity of the first floor extension to the boundary with Woodview. The development proposed would be contrary to policy 28 of the District Local Plan being within one metre of the boundary. There are no exceptional circumstances here in my view to overcome this policy objection. Whilst the group of dwellings along this side of the road are individual in character and on large plots both Woodview and Dalkeith have been extended at first floor level in close proximity to a boundary. This latest extension if permitted would cause a terracing effect and impact upon the character of the area.

In addition I have considered the objections raised but would not support an additional reason for refusal on either privacy or daylight/sunlight grounds in this case.

4.3.17 Policy 28 no longer applies. The neighbouring dwelling at Wood View has since been extended and has a two storey side extension on this boundary, with no side facing windows. In my view, this change in circumstances negates the terracing effect upon the neighbouring dwelling.

- 4.3.18 Proposed rear extension would be relatively modest in the context of the dwelling and would not be visible from the public realm. It would have a sympathetic roof form and materials. I do not consider that the proposed rear extension would be harmful to the character and appearance of the locality.
- 4.3.19 Proposed link extension and first floor addition to the garage would be visible from the street scene. The proposed extension would be subordinate in scale and set back from the principal elevation whilst having a sympathetic roof form, materials and seeking to balance the extension on the north side of the dwelling. Whilst there would be some loss of the skygap, given the lack of uniformity within the street scene and the tree screening to the front of the site and sympathetic design, the loss of this gap is considered acceptable.
- 4.3.20 The extensions in cumulation would constitute a significant enlargement of the dwelling. However, given the lack of uniformity in the street scene and the significant size of other dwellings within the locality, such as the adjacent Wood View. I would not consider a dwelling of this size to be out of context for the street scene.
- 4.3.21 The proposal complies with Policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties:

- 4.3.22 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.

Impact on Southern Wood and Mead House

- 4.3.23 The proposed development would set away from the boundaries with these neighbours and would be screened by the existing dwelling and therefore would not affect neighbouring amenity.

Impact on Wood View

- 4.3.24 The proposed development would see a first-floor extension to the garage located on the boundary. Whilst, **02/00993/1HH** was refused on this basis. Given the fact the Wood View now has a two-storey side addition set off this boundary which would have a similar depth to the proposed extension would negate any neighbour harm. There are no side windows proposed in the link extension, however there would be side windows within the rear extension. Given the fact these windows would replace existing non-obscured windows, no new vantage points for overlooking of neighbouring amenity are being created.
- 4.3.24 The proposal therefore complies with Policy D3 of the Local Plan.

Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.25 The proposed development would result in the creating a 2-bedroom residential annexe. The dwelling benefits from a large driveway which could provide 2 parking spaces for both the host dwelling and for the proposed annexe and therefore complies with Policy T2 of the Local Plan.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 4.3.26 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:

- 4.3.27 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.
- 4.3.28 The proposed development, would result in improved energy efficiency for the property and the integration of solar panels. As such it 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, SP5, SP9, HS6, 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 extension(s) hereby permitted shall be built in external materials to match the existing dwellinghouse unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA.

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. The residential annexe hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwellinghouse known as Dalkeith

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 and to comply with Policy HS6 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: 16 October 2025	