

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/01064/FPH	Alterations to existing roof including raised ridge height and insertion of rear box dormer and front rooflights to facilitate conversion of loft into habitable accommodation.	12 Thatchers End Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 0PD

Submitted Plan Nos

ELA/21 ELA/13 ELA/1 ELA/2 ELA/6 ELA/12 ELA/13 ELA/14

1.0 Policies

D1 Sustainable design

D2 House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild

D3 Protecting living conditions

T2 Parking

SECN12 Achieving well-designed places

SECN14 Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 22/02101/FPH – First floor rear extension over existing extension. – Conditional Permission

2.2 16/02847/1HH - Single storey front, side and rear extension (as amended by drawing 1187-01C received 07/12/2016). – Conditional Permission

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Neighbour Representations** – None received

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The site comprises No. 12 Thatchers End, Hitchin. The dwelling is semi-detached

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Planning Permission is sought for:

Alterations to existing roof including raised ridge height and insertion of rear box dormer and front rooflights to facilitate conversion of loft into habitable accommodation.

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 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 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.

4.3.3 The existing dwelling forms half of a pair of semi-detached dwellings. The local street scene includes dwellings of varying sizes and with varying extensions and enlargements to their front, sides and rears. These include single and two storey enlargements. Aerial imagery does not show dormer window within Thatchers End or within the local roofscape and street scene. The roofscape is consistent, without variations in ridge height and roof bulk/form. Topographical variations are overcome by landscaping of the surrounding levels to result in the dwellings sitting at a consistent level to their respective sides of the road, meaning the ridge heights of dwellings is a consistent feature. The proposed raising of the ridge, by approximately 0.75m would appear as an incongruous alteration to the dwelling, notably due to the ridge sitting higher than the adjoining neighbour's (No. 10) ridge and other dwellings locally. This would result in a form of development that would be significantly at odds with local character, and which would erode the consistent and planned built form and layout of dwellings found locally. The raised position of the dwelling compared to the highway level would exacerbate the visual impacts. The harm to the character and appearance of the locality would be unacceptable. The dormer window would be to the rear of the dwelling and is proposed to be constructed as part of the raised ridge height. The dormer is considered to result in a top-heavy form of development that would be out of place in the consistent roofscape found nearby. Erecting a dormer would erode the consistent and planned character of Thatchers End and would potentially set a harmful precedent for similar development. It would be unacceptable in design terms.

4.3.4 The proposed development is therefore considered to be contrary 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 design and appearance are therefore unacceptable.

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 application dwelling is attached by its neighbour, No. 10, to the east. To the west is No. 8 a detached dwelling. A garage block neighbours the site to the rear. Opposite is two storey dwellings set at a lower level than No. 12. The proposed increase in ridge height and the erection of the dormer window would not enlarge the dwelling beyond principal and rear elevations, and are therefore unlikely to overshadow or dominate the attached or opposite neighbours. The dormer window would allow for a raised vantage point compared to existing, however, this would not cause significantly overlooking or losses of privacy compared to the existing window arrangement. 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.

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.

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.

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 Whilst the alteration of a dwelling is acceptable in principle within a residential area, the proposal would result in clear and demonstrable harm in respect of its impact on the host property and character and appearance of the area. These adverse impacts are considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh any limited benefits associated with the proposal. The development would therefore be contrary to policies D1 and D3 of the Local Plan 2011-2031.

4.5 Alternative Options

- 4.5.1 None applicable.

5.0 **Recommendation**

5.1 That planning permission be **REFUSED** for the following reasons:

1. The proposed raised ridge height, by reason of its scale and height above the existing ridge, and the dormer by reason of its appearance, would be unsympathetic to the host dwelling and would fail to respond positively to the site's local context and character, resulting in a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the property and the surrounding area. The proposed development would fail to comply with Policy D1 and D2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 and Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been refused for this proposal for the clear reasons set out in this decision notice. The Council has not acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant as in the Council's view the proposal is unacceptable in principle and the fundamental objections cannot be overcome through dialogue. Since no solutions can be found the Council has complied 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: 18 June 2026	