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| <b>DELEGATED FILE NOTE</b> |
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**CASE OFFICER:** ...Tabitha Kaye.....

| APPLICATION<br>REFERENCE | BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF<br>DEVELOPMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | APPLICATION SITE                                                                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 26/00739/FP              | Refurbishment of restaurant to include single storey front extension to provide fast forward booth, single storey rear extension to provide additional internal seating area, and single storey side extension to provide covered winter terrace. Installation of access door with glazing. Reconfiguration and extension of the patio area to include a play frame. Alterations to existing parking area to include block paving, fencing, railings, changes to kerb lines and pedestrian crossing. Alterations to external materials. | Mcdonalds Restaurants Ltd<br>Baldock Road<br>Royston<br>Hertfordshire<br>SG8 9NT |

**Submitted Plan Nos**

P21-050-1413-01-C P21-050-1413-02-B P21-050-1413-03-C P21-050-1413-05-B P21-050-1413-06-B  
P21-050-1413-50-C P21-050-1413-300-C

## 1.0 Policies

|        |                                         |
|--------|-----------------------------------------|
| SECN12 | Achieving well-designed places          |
| SECN14 | Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding |
| SP9    | Design and Sustainability               |
| CGB1   | Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt.      |
| D1     | Sustainable design                      |
| D3     | Protecting living conditions            |
| T2     | Parking                                 |

## 2.0 Relevant Site History

- 2.1 **21/03039/FP:** Installation of three rapid electric vehicle charging stations. **Conditional Permission.**
- 2.2 **14/01654/1:** Alterations to access and car park layout. (As amended by plans and reports received 22 September 2014). **Conditional Permission.**

- 2.3 **12/01853/1:** Freestanding restaurant with associated drive thru lane, car parking and landscaping (as amended by plan received 10 October 2012). **Conditional Permission.**

### 3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 **Site Notice and Neighbour Consultation** – 3no. received in objection. Including: 4 Cornish Close, 6 Mallard Road, 39 Hampshire Road. Comments summarised below:

- Increase in restaurant capacity will result in increased litter, to the detriment of neighbouring residential areas and Therfield Heath (SSSI);
- Reduction in on-site parking could cause on-street overspill parking;
- Worsened air quality as a result of high traffic volumes;
- Impact on residential amenity from noise pollution.

- 3.2 **Royston Town Council** – No objection – subject to the following conditions:

- All external lighting is downfacing;
- A litter management plan is enforced which covers Hedera Gardens and car parks within Therfield Heath;
- Therfield Heath SSSI mitigation measures.

- 3.3 **NHC Environmental Health** – No objection.

- 3.4 **Ward Cllr** – No objection.

Notice was served to Ward Cllr following the comments received by Royston Town Council on the basis that the Officer did not deem it necessary to implement the suggested conditions. The Cllr expressed that they did not wish to 'call in' the application to Planning Control Committee.

### 4.0 **Planning Considerations**

- 4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The application site accommodates McDonalds restaurant, which is situated along Baldock Road, Royston. The site is bordered by the A505 to the north, a roundabout to the west, Baldock Road to the south, and a car wash/ residential area (Orpington Road and Landacre Drive) to the east. The restaurant is positioned to the north-west of the site, with the car park and access to the east and south. The site is within the 'Rural Area beyond the Green Belt'.

## 4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Refurbishment of restaurant to include single storey front extension to provide fast forward booth, single storey rear extension to provide additional internal seating area, and single storey side extension to provide covered winter terrace. Installation of access door with glazing. Reconfiguration and extension of the patio area to include a play frame. Alterations to existing parking area to include block paving, fencing, railings, changes to kerb lines and pedestrian crossing. Alterations to external materials.

## 4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are as follows:

- Principle of development;
- Design and impact on local character;
- Impact on neighbour amenity;
- Highways and parking matters;
- Impact on the environment;
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

### Principle of Development

- 4.3.2 Policy CGB1 of the North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031 (NHLP) states that development within the 'Rural Area beyond the Green Belt' (RABGB) will be supported where it relates to an 'existing rural building'. I consider the restaurant to be an 'existing rural building', meaning that the development is acceptable within the RABGB.

### Design and Impact on Local Character

- 4.3.3 Policy D1 of the NHLP requires that development proposals respond positively to the site's local context. This policy is broadly consistent with paragraph 135 of the NPPF. The proposed alterations to the restaurant would include a modest winter terrace area, a new fast forward booth, a small rear extension, and changes to the external materials.
- 4.3.4 The new fast forward booth would extend beyond the south elevation as far as the existing drive through booth, and then to the west by 12.3m. The booth would have a flat roof and would measure 2.7m in height, as per the existing booths. Materials would match existing. Therefore, the fast forward booth extension would provide visual continuity to the south elevation and is acceptable in design terms.
- 4.3.5 The rear extension to the restaurant would be small in scale, projecting beyond the north elevation by 1.46m to create a window alcove. The existing windows would be re-used, and materials to match existing, to ensure visual continuity along the north elevation. The rear extension is therefore acceptable in design terms.
- 4.3.6 The winter terrace would project beyond the west elevation by 5m, measuring 12.3m in width. The terrace would have a flat roof, and the height would match the existing eaves of the restaurant. The terrace would be constructed of glazing and timber look-alike aluminium vertical slats. The terrace would be a proportionate addition to the restaurant and would match the existing site character in design and use of materials, and is therefore acceptable.
- 4.3.7 The proposed patio area would extend beyond the terrace area, which is currently occupied by parking spaces. The patio area would feature the McDonalds 'Play Land' structure, which is common feature across McDonalds restaurants, and associated low rise fencing. Thus, the proposed patio area would be sited in a suitable location within the site and be of an acceptable design.
- 4.3.8 Overall, the proposed developments would be commensurate with the existing site character and therefore accords with Policy D1 of the NHLP, as well as paragraph 135 of Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### Impact on Neighbouring Sites and Residences

- 4.3.9 Policy D3 of the Local Plan permits development that does not result in acceptable harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and encourages the use of mitigation measures where necessary. Policy D3 is generally reflected by the provisions of the NPPF.

- 4.3.10 Neighbouring representations highlighted that the increase in customer traffic generated by the restaurant extensions would cause an unacceptable degree of noise pollution. The proposed extensions would be positioned to the north-west of the site, which borders the A505 and the roundabout, which maintains a large separation gap between the restaurant and Orpington Road/ Landacre Drive to the east. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on these dwellings in relation to noise pollution.
- 4.3.11 Neighbour representations and comments submitted by the Royston Town Council highlight potential impacts of litter upon neighbouring properties to the east. It is considered that there are an adequate number of bins on site to facilitate customer waste disposal. Furthermore, the littering issues beyond the site boundary fall outside of the planning remit.
- 4.3.12 The Royston Town Council suggested that all external lighting should be conditioned to be downfacing. No external lighting is proposed as part of the application. Therefore, this condition is not relevant to the application.
- 4.3.13 Overall, the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact upon the amenity of existing neighbouring sites and therefore accords with Policy D3 of the NHLP and Section 12 of the NPPF.

#### Highways and Parking

- 4.3.14 Policy T2 of the NHLP states that parking provision for non-residential development should have regard for the parking standards published by the NHDC 2011 supplementary planning document, *Vehicle Parking at New Developments*.
- 4.3.15 The provision of the side extension and external play area to the west of the restaurant would decrease the on-site parking provision from 51no. bays to 43no. bays. As outlined in the supporting Design and Access Statement, the provision of 43no. bays is commensurate with the increase in GIA to 374 sqm, as per the requirements of the NHDC 2011 parking standards.
- 4.3.16 While overspill parking was raised as a concern by the representation received, the proposal would meet the requirements for adequate on-site parking provision, meaning that the development would not result in unacceptable parking arrangements. Thus, the proposal complies with Policy T2 of the NHLP.

#### Environmental Implications

- 4.3.17 Policy D1 of the NHLP outlines the Council's commitment to supporting climate change mitigation through the requirement for schemes to incorporate the principles of

'sustainable design'; with which the proposal is commensurate with. Policy D1 is broadly consistent with the aims of Section 14 of the NPPF.

- 4.3.18 The representations received highlighted concerns regarding the impact of the development upon Therfield Heath SSSI to the south, as well as air pollution. As highlighted previously in the report, there is adequate provision on site for customers to dispose of litter. Environmental Health have raised no concerns regarding air quality. The impacts of the proposed developments upon the environment are considered to be acceptable.

#### Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 4.3.19 Due to the existing hardstanding on site, the area of habitats affected would be approximately 6 sqm. Therefore, this is a form of development which is exempt from BNG Legislation, defined under article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 due it falling under the scope of the 'de minimis' exemption.

#### 4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 In the absence of material planning reasons to the contrary it is my view that planning permission is **GRANTED**.

#### 4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None.

#### 4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 None.

#### 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.

#### **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. 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.

|                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Signed</p> <p></p> <p>Anne McDonald</p> | <p>Development Management<br/>North Hertfordshire District Council<br/>Council Offices<br/>Gernon Road<br/>Letchworth<br/>Herts<br/>SG6 3JF</p> |
| <p>Determining Officer</p> <p><b>Date:</b> 3 June 2026</p>                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                 |