

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Tom Rea.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/01679/FP	Single storey infill extension (as amended by plan no. PL-TRD-2419C)	93A Bancroft Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 1NQ

Submitted Plan Nos

TRD-2419C-A1/01

1.0 Policies

D1 Sustainable design

D3 Protecting living conditions

ETC5	Secondary Shopping Frontages
HE1	Designated heritage assets
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN16	Conserve + enhance historic environment
SECN6	Building strong, competitive economy

1.0 **Relevant Planning Policies**

1.1 North Herts Local Plan 2011 - 3031

- ☐ Policy ETC5: Secondary Shopping Frontages
- ☐ Policy SP4: Town Centres
- ☐ Policy ETC3: Town Centre development
- ☐ Policy HE1: Heritage assets
- ☐ Policy D3: Protecting Living Conditions
- ☐ Policy D1: Design
- ☐ Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability
- ☐ Policy SP13: Historic Environment
- ☐ Policy NE11: Contaminated land

1.2 NPPF (2024) Relevant throughout and specifically: Sections 2, 6, 7, 12 and 16.

2.0 **Site History**

- 2.1 13/00821/1 Two storey extension and alterations to existing building to create one retail unit (Class A3) at ground floor together with 1 x 1-bed and 1 x 2-bed flats at first floor. (Amended plan received 17/06/13). 25/04/2013
- 2.2 13/00670/1LB Internal and external alterations to building to facilitate conversion from offices to residential use. Two storey rear extension to number 93A Bancroft. (Amended plan received 17/06/13). 25/04/2013

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 Site Notice/ Adjoining occupiers: No replies received

3.2 NHDC Conservation officer (on amended plans):
Requested revisions. No comments on amended plan.

3.3 HCC Historic Environment officer:
No response to original consultation. Reconsulted 23.01.26. Received 4th Feb 2026
Advice as follows:
‘In this instance, we have no comments to make’.

3.4 NHDC Environmental Health: Advises as follows:

Noise (and other nuisances): The application seeks to infill an existing patio area with a conservatory type structure. Given the location and proposals, I have no objections to the application.

Land contamination: Suggest condition as follows:

‘In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development, it shall be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment shall then be undertaken by a competent person, in accordance with BS10175:2011. A written report of the findings should be forwarded for approval to the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of remedial measures a verification report shall be prepared that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out. No part of the development should be occupied until all remedial and validation works are approved in writing.

Reason: To prevent unacceptable risk to Human Health and Controlled Waters and to prevent pollution of the Environment in accordance with the aims and Paragraphs 187(f), 196 and 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024).’

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The site is located on a primarily pedestrianised side road off of Bancroft, within the historic core of Hitchin town centre. The site is flanked by other listed buildings and is situated within the Hitchin Conservation Area. To the front, the property opens out to a hardstanding area. The proposal relates specifically to the front of the premises, which does not face onto Bancroft, but a side street linking Bancroft with the Sainsburys supermarket. This mainly pedestrianised walkway is not a public footpath or definitive right of way

4.1.2 The surrounding area is characterised by a mix of commercial uses, with restaurants, shops, and services occupying the ground floors of historic buildings. The site is within a Secondary Shopping Frontage as designated in the Local Plan and Policy ECT5.

4.1.3 The site lies within Character Area 2a of the Hitchin Conservation Area, an area noted for its dense historic urban grain and high concentration of heritage assets. While 93a Bancroft is itself a Grade II listed building, it is surrounded by a significant number of Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDAs), including Buildings of Local Interest (BLIs) and other 'positive' buildings identified in the Hitchin Conservation Area Character Statement (2011).

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 The proposals, as amended, is for a single storey infill extension to the building to create addition indoor seating area for the existing café. As amended by drawing no. TRD-2419-A1/01

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 Principle of café use

4.3.2 The site is located within a Secondary Shopping Frontage and Policy ETC5 says:

'In the Secondary Shopping Frontages of Hitchin, Letchworth Garden City, Baldock and Royston, as shown on the Policies Map, planning permission will be granted at ground-floor level: a) For shops, financial and professional services, restaurants and cafes, pubs or drinking establishments and takeaways; or b) For other main town centre uses⁸⁷ if it does not individually or cumulatively, undermine the retail function of the centre or detract from the centre's vitality and viability.'

The use is an extension of the existing use and meets one of the identified appropriate uses in the SSF's.

4.3.4 Design

The design of the extension has been significantly amended from the rather domesticated appearance of the initial 'conservatory' design and the flat roof is now hidden behind a parapet wall. The brick infill design matches the predominant use of brick on the main elevations of the host building. White painted timber windows would match the full length windows on the existing building and brickwork will need to match the existing in terms of type bond and mortar. Overall I consider that the proposed infill would be in accordance with Policies SP9 and D1 of the Local Plan.

In terms of the impact on the street scene the proposed infill would be seen as an integral part of the existing retail unit and would, through its large doors opening onto the adjacent thoroughfare, maintain the vitality and viability of this secondary shopping frontage. The use would also be complementary to the adjacent chemist and supermarket and the pedestrian environment in general.

4.3.5 Impact on heritage assets

Given the nearby listed buildings, I am mindful of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the LBCA Act') which

requires special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building, its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The setting of the Hitchin Conservation Area must also be taken into account.

4.3.6 The application is accompanied by a Heritage statement which concludes that the proposals will have a neutral impact largely due to its sympathetic materials, visually recessive appearance and the structure blending in with the surrounding commercial setting. There would be little if any impact on the fabric of the host listed building. I would agree with this assessment as does the Council's Conservation officer.

4.3.7 The proposals would be consistent with the advice set out in Local Plan Policies SP13 and HE1 of the Local Plan and Section 15 of the NPPF

4.3.8 Archaeology

4.3.9 The site has previously been excavated and no archaeological finds of any importance were discovered. The County Archaeologist does not require any further archaeological investigation on this site.

4.3.9 Contamination

This issue can be dealt with via a suitably worded condition in the event that any contamination is found during construction works.

4.3.10 Parking

4.3.11 No parking would be required for this small increase in floorspace in a town centre location.

4.3.12 Biodiversity and Landscaping

4.3.13 There is no net loss of habitat and the application is exempt under the BNG Exemptions (2024 Regulations).

4.3.14 Climate change

4.3.15 The modest scale of the development means that it is unlikely to have any significant impact on local climate change.

4.4 **Conclusion**

4.4.1 Acceptable in planning and heritage terms.

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 facing brickwork proposed shall match the brick type, colour pattern, bond and mortar pointing as existing on the main building.

Reason: To ensure that the development maintains a high quality of design and appearance appropriate to the setting of the heritage assets affected. To comply with Policies D1, SP9 and HE1 of the Local Plan.

4. In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development, it shall be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment shall then be undertaken by a competent person, in accordance with BS10175:2011. A written report of the findings should be forwarded for approval to the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of remedial measures a verification report shall be prepared that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out. No part of the development should be occupied until all remedial and validation works are approved in writing.

Reason: To prevent unacceptable risk to Human Health and Controlled Waters and to prevent pollution of the Environment in accordance with the aims and Paragraphs 187(f), 196 and 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). To comply with Policy NE11 of the Local Plan

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  Shaun Greaves Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 18 February 2026	