

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Vicki Wood.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/02874/FP	Replacement windows to front, side and rear elevations.	111 Walsworth Road Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9SP

Submitted Plan Nos

L01 L-02 L-03

1.0 Policies

1.0 **Local and National Policy**

1.1 **National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF)**

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

1.2 **North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (NHLP)**

Strategic Policies

Policy SP1 – Sustainable development in North Hertfordshire

Policy SP2 – Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution

Policy SP9 – Design and Sustainability

Policy SP13 – Historic environment

Development Management Policies

Policy D1 – Sustainable Design

Policy D3 – Protecting living conditions

Policy HE1 – Designated heritage assets

2.0 **Relevant Site History**

2.1 None.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Press, Site and Neighbour Consultation** – None received.

3.2 **NHC Conservation Officer** – No objection with suggested condition to ensure vertical sliding sash windows only and to be retained on the front elevation of the property.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The application site comprises of an attractive traditionally constructed two-storey detached building set back from the south side of Walsworth Road Baptist Church and its associated Church Hall and to the east of a block of flats accessed via Harrison Close.

4.1.2 The building is identified as a positive building within the Hitchin Conservation Area.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Replacement windows to front, side and rear elevations.
- 4.2.2 A sample window has been delivered to site in support of the application and is considered to be of an acceptable design.

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 Hitchin Conservation Area.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on the property as a positive building within the Hitchin Conservation Area.

Design, Appearance and Impact on the Conservation Area:

- 4.3.2 Within a Conservation Area, the Council has a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, in accordance with Section 72 of the Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act (1990). Furthermore, Section 16 of the NPPF sets out guidance relating to sustaining and enhancing heritage assets. In this regard, Policy HE1 of the NHLP is consistent with the NPPF.
- 4.3.3 When considering the impact of proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset (such as a Conservation Area), the NPPF notes that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation; the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.
- 4.3.4 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 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 to communities”*. In this regard, Policy D1 and D2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan are consistent with the objectives set out within the NPPF.
- 4.3.5 The development would see existing windows which are mostly timber with single glazing replaced with uPVC double glazed vertical sliding sash windows of an almost identical appearance. This would include all four windows to the front elevation, plus the three windows within the extended bay. A first floor window and a high level ground floor window would be replaced to the northwest elevation and a ground floor window to the northeast elevation within the annex together with a further three ground floor windows to the rear of the annex extension.
- 4.3.6 Whilst it is unfortunate that the traditional timber window frames will be lost, it is accepted that they are almost beyond repair with replacements seeking to improve the overall energy performance of the building.

- 4.3.7 The proposed design of the replacement windows is considered acceptable and would not give rise to harm to the character and appearance of this positive building and the contribution it makes towards the wider Hitchin Conservation Area.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties:

- 4.3.8 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.
- 4.3.9 The proposed development would not result in significant harm to existing residential amenity and is acceptable.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 4.3.10 The proposed development is considered 'de minimis' and would not exceed the threshold of 25 sqm of on-site habitat, or and/ less than 5 meters of linear habitats. This application is therefore exempt from BNG legislation defined under article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Environmental Implications:

- 4.3.11 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.
- 4.3.12 The proposed development, 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 Policies SP1, SP9, SP13, D1, D3 and HE1 of the NHLP 2011-2031 and Sections 2, 12, 14 and 16 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. Replacement windows W1, W2, W3, W4, W6 and W7 on the front elevation as indicated on approved drawing nos. L-02 and L-03 shall be vertically sliding sashes without trickle vents and shall include the glazing bar profile and sash horn details forming part of the sample window type inspected on site by the Local Planning Authority's Conservation Officer on 14 March 2025, unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to the character and appearance of the Hitchin Conservation Area and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

Biodiversity Net Gain

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.

Signed  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 18 March 2025	