

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Alex Howard.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/01953/FP	Change of use from light industrial (Use Class B2) to storage and distribution (Use Class B8) including internal works to install a partition wall creating two separate storage units for commercial rental.	Thrifty House Unit 4 Bilton Road Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 0SB

Submitted Plan Nos

Location Plan A01 A02 A03 A04 A05 A06 A07

1.0 Policies

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 Extensive site history. None relevant.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Environmental Health** – No objections.

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

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The site is an industrial unit located on Bilton Road, Hitchin. The building is brick built with an office and industrial unit, with associated hardstanding and fencing. The site is within the Hitchin Employment Area.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 The application seeks planning permission for the change of use from light industrial (Use Class B2) to storage and distribution (Use Class B8) including internal works to install a partition wall creating two separate storage units for commercial rental.

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 The site is within an Employment Area. Policy ETC1 is relevant which states:

“Within the safeguarded Employment Areas, and the Employment Allocations (BA10 and RY9), as shown on the Policies Map, planning permission will be granted for office, research and development, industrial processes, industrial and storage and distribution uses provided:

- a) For allocated sites any relevant site-specific criteria are met; and*
- b) Any Use Class B8 development is easily accessible from the primary road network”.*

4.3.2 The site is not allocated, and the proposal is for a B8 storage and distribution use. The proposal is to retain the front section of the unit for the existing occupier, whilst splitting the remaining space in half to rent out. As per part b), the site is within close proximity and has good access to the A505, which leads to the A1M. There are a number of industrial, and storage/distribution uses in this Employment Area and therefore, this change of use from B2 to B8 is considered acceptable in principle.

- 4.3.3 The only changes necessary to facilitate this change of use are internal works, namely a partition wall splitting the unit in two. This does not require planning permission.
- 4.3.4 The proposal will not result in any adverse impacts to neighbour amenity, nor result in any parking issues, given the sizable areas of parking in this employment area.
- 4.3.5 No restrictive conditions were imposed on the original planning permission for this use under ref: 03/01488/1 when it was permitted to Class B2. Given that B2 and B8 are largely similar uses and this site is an industrial, Employment Area, there are no conditions that are considered necessary to restrict or control development in this case.
- 4.3.6 This proposal is exempt from the mandatory 10% BNG, given its nature and scale.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposal is considered acceptable in planning terms against the relevant Local and National planning policies.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None.

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.

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.

Signed  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 16 September 2025	