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| <b>DELEGATED FILE NOTE</b> |
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**CASE OFFICER:** ...Vicki Wood.....

| APPLICATION<br>REFERENCE | BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF<br>DEVELOPMENT                                                | APPLICATION SITE                                                                 |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 25/01241/FPH             | Single storey side and rear extension (as amended by plan received on 06/08/2025). | 57 Gernon Road<br><br>Letchworth Garden City<br><br>Hertfordshire<br><br>SG6 3HS |

**Submitted Plan Nos**

Location Plan 2022/30/02 2022/30/01 Rev F

**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 challenges 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 D2 – House extensions, replacement dwellings and outbuildings

Policy D3 – Protecting living conditions

Policy HE1 – Designated heritage assets

## 2.0 **Relevant Site History**

2.1 15/02320/1HH - Two storey rear extension following demolition of existing garage. Conditional permission.

2.2 19/00870/FPH - Part two storey and part single storey rear extension and new attached garage following demolition of existing detached garage. New first floor obscure glazed window in side (east) elevation. Conditional Permission.

2.3 22/03169/FPH - Single storey side and rear extension following demolition of existing detached garage (as amended by plan received on 17th April 2023). Conditional permission.

2.4 25/00876/NMA - Alteration to footprint of proposed extension and increase in height of 120mm (as non-material amendment to planning application 22/03169/FPH granted on 24.04.2023). Withdrawn.

2.4 A summary of the previous permissions shows that under 15/02320/1HH following demolition of the existing garage the extension which has a depth of 3.6 metres is set

below the ridge line of the existing dwelling however the extension is flush with the east flank elevation of the existing dwelling. Application 19/00870/FPH which retains the garage also refers to a rear extension which is flush with the east flank elevation and set down from the ridge height of the existing dwelling. Application 22/03169/FPH shows a single storey side and rear extension following demolition of an existing garage. The extension would be set 0.3 metres from the boundary with the neighbouring property no.59 Gernon Road with a total depth of 9.8 metres from the existing rear elevation of the dwelling. The east flank wall of the proposed extension, minus the parapet would measure 2.8 metres with a total height to the rear of 3.3 metres and to the west elevation ranging from 3.2 metres to 3.4 metres at its highest point, this is due to a slight slope of the land which gradually falls away from the property.

### 3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Press, Site and Neighbour Consultation** – Two comments have been received from nos.55 and 59 Gernon Road. No.55 Gernon Road supports the application whilst No.59 objects to the application of the following grounds which are summarised as follows:

- The extension is out of all proportion with the original dwelling in terms of height and size.
- Unsympathetic design and consideration for the Conservation Area and the Garden City principles.
- Impact on the residential amenity of no.59 Gernon Road due to height increase to 3.3 metres.

3.2 **LGCHF** - confirm objection is related to the height of the extension and that the stone parapet be replaced with a tile creasing and brick on edge.

### 4.0 **Planning Considerations**

#### 4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The application site lies on the south side of Gernon Road and comprises of a semi-detached dwelling with previous detached garage sited to the rear of the dwelling. The garage has since been demolished hence the retrospective nature of the current submission. The original garage was sited alongside the garage and party boundary of the neighbouring property known as no.59 Gernon Road located to the east.

4.1.2 The application site is within the settlement boundary for Letchworth where development is generally acceptable subject to policy requirements.

#### 4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Single storey side and rear extension (development already carried out).

#### 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 locally listed building and the character and appearance of the Conservation 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

- 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 Local Plan are consistent with the objectives set out within the NPPF.
- 4.3.3 The development would see the proposed side extension set back from the rear elevation of the dwelling by 1.5 metres and set off the boundary with no.59 Gernon Road by 0.8 metres at its closest point with a depth of 8.1 metres and width of 4.0 metres. The height of the side extension would be 3.3 metres which takes into account the change in ground level of 0.2 metres between this and the rear extension.
- 4.3.4 The proposed rear extension would be set off the boundary with no.55 Gernon Road by 0.4 metres with a depth of 3.6 metres and width of 6.7 metres. The height of the rear extension would be 3.1 metres.
- 4.3.5 Having considered the plans submitted showing the existing elevation of the property, there appears no difference in the land level between the proposed side and rear extensions, albeit the proposed plans show a 0.2 metre drop in the land level between the proposed rear and side extensions. Given the previous approval for the development shows a height of 2.8 metres to the east flank elevation, the proposal now shows a height of 3.3 metres an increase in 0.5 metres. It is understood from the agent that a height of 2.8 metres is unachievable given required internal floor to ceiling heights. However, a height of 3.3 metres despite a setback position of 0.8 metres from the party boundary alongside the neighbouring property no.59 Gernon Road which sits at a lower ground level would result in a significant and over dominant structure that fails to respond positively to the site’s local context in terms of scale, height and massing and fails to meet the requirements of Policy D1 and D2 of development is contrary to acceptable and in accordance with Policy D1 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

### Impact on Heritage Assets

- 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 Local Plan 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 Comments from LGCHF state that they would prefer to see the that the stone parapet be replaced with a tile creasing and brick on edge. I agree with this comment in terms of the design and appearance of the extension however given the neighbouring garage design to no.59 I would not insist on this design aspect being incorporated into the scheme and conclude that in my view, should the height be reduced there would not be any significant harm to the heritage significance of the conservation area.
- 4.3.5 I am satisfied that the development is acceptable and in accordance with Policy HE1 of the Local Plan and Section 16 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties:

- 4.3.9 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 Local Plan.
- 4.3.10 One objection has been received from the neighbouring property to the proposed side extension no.59 Gernon Road on the basis of scale and impact on existing residential amenity. No.59 has a covered pergola structure in their rear garden which reduces the impact of the extension at 57 Gernon Road to some extent. However, the pergola benefits from open sides which allows for natural light to pass through and which remains at a height which does not impact the existing property or the residential amenity of neighbouring properties. I am therefore of the view that the scale and dominance of the extension does impact on the existing residential amenity of no.59 Gernon Road to the extent where an extension to a height of 3.3 metres is unacceptable and contrary to Policy D3 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.12 The dwelling is served by sufficient off-street parking spaces which would not be affected by the proposed development and is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy T2 of the Local Plan.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 4.3.13 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.

Environmental Implications:

- 4.3.14 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 Local Plan, which sets out that development proposals 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.

- 4.3.15 In my view, the proposed development would be unlikely to have any significant implications for the local environment in terms of carbon emissions and therefore would be generally in accordance with Policy D1 of the Local Plan and Section 14 of the NPPF.

#### 4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposed development is considered contrary to SP1, SP9, D1, D2 and D3, of the Local Plan 2011-2031 and Sections 2, 12 and 14 of the NPPF.

#### 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 **REFUSED** for the following reasons:

1. The proposed extension, by reason of its design and height, would result in an unacceptable overbearing impact upon the occupiers of the adjoining neighbouring property known as no.59 Gernon Road, Letchworth. The proposed development would fail to comply with Policy D3 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 and the core principles set out in Section 12 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.

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <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> 16 September 2025</p>                                                            |                                                                                                                                                 |