

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...William Thompson.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/00421/FPH	Change of use of existing detached outbuilding to one 2-bed annexe ancillary to main dwelling (Development already carried out).	Silvermead Lower Titmore Green Little Wymondley Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 7JT

Submitted Plan Nos

663 x PL00 663 x PL01A 663 x PL02

1.0 Policies

D1	Sustainable design
D2	House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild
D3	Protecting living conditions
T2	Parking

HS6 Relatives and dependents accommodation

SECN12 Achieving well-designed places

SECN13 Protecting Green Belt Land

SECN14 Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding

2.0 **Relevant Site History**

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|-----|--|-------------------------------|
| 2.1 | 24/01746/LDCP - Erection of outbuilding in rear garden to provide office space, gym and games room | |
| 2.2 | 21/01975/FPH - Erection of oak framed car port extension to side of existing detached garage | Granted |
| 2.3 | 96/00981/1HH - Porch and single storey rear extension | Conditional Permission |
| 2.4 | 91/00114/1 - Two storey side extension | Conditional Permission |
| 2.5 | 80/01392/1 - Erection of single storey rear extension. | Conditional Permission |
| 2.6 | 78/00596/1 - Erection of detached double garage and front entrance door cover | Conditional Permission |

3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 **Neighbour Consultation** – No objections.
- 3.2 **Wymondley Parish Council** – No objection: declared enforcement matter

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The application site accommodates a detached, two-storey dwelling situated on Lower Titmore Green, Little Wymondley. The application site benefits from a generous plot with a driveway and multiple outbuildings, including the existing outbuilding know as 'Littlemead' for change of use to an annexe.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Change of use of existing detached outbuilding to one 2-bed annexe ancillary to main dwelling (Development already carried out).

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are as follows:

- The principle of the development in the Green Belt and to erect a residential annexe.
- The acceptability of the design of the proposed development and its impact on the character and appearance of the area.
- The impact of the proposed development on the living conditions of neighbouring properties.
- Access and parking matters.
- The impact of the proposed development on the environment.

Principle

Annexe:

4.3.2 Policy HS6 of the Local Plan 2011-2031 sets out the requirements for introducing residential annexes.

These criteria advise that permission will be granted provided:

“a) a genuine need for the accommodation is demonstrated;

b) the annex is subordinate to the main dwelling and designed in such a way that it can be easily (re-)incorporated into the main house if use as an annex ceases;

c) any development would not exceed the size of extensions that would otherwise normally be acceptable; and

d) the occupation of the accommodation is restricted by condition.

Free standing annexes will be allowed where the above criteria are met and it can be demonstrated that adaptation or extension of the main house is not possible.”

4.3.3 The applicant has advised that the annexe is needed and has been used for the accommodation of elderly family members associated with the main household. I consider that this is suitable to meet a). The scale of the outbuilding is considered to be subordinate to the main dwelling by virtue of its size and position within the site. While the surrounding fence may give the appearance of a separate curtilage, the use and scale of the outbuilding remain subservient and robust justification has been presented for the fence to remain in place. Matters of the acceptability of the scale of the building will be considered in the design section of this report. b) is considered to be complied with. c) is considered to be complied with, subject to its design being acceptable. Should permission be granted, d) would be complied with.

4.3.4 Given the layout of the dwelling, it does not appear as though the main dwelling is suitable for conversion or for partition to create an annexe.

4.3.5 Given that the building is freestanding, and due to the second matter regarding the suitability for conversion of the main dwelling, I consider that there is suitable justification for the siting of the annexe. Subject to the acceptability of design, Policy HS6 is considered to be complied with.

Green Belt:

- 4.3.6 The site is within the Green Belt as allocated within the Local Plan. Paragraph 153 of the NPPF advises that significant weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt that arises from development unless Very Special Circumstances can be demonstrated to outweigh this harm. Paragraph 154 of the NPPF advises that the erection of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate development unless the development comprises one of the exceptions listed under this section. Exception c) advises *“the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;”*.
- 4.3.7 It is considered that the building conversion falls within the scope of exception c). The development does not result in the enlargement of the built form of the building and dwelling, and therefore does not result in disproportionate additions over the original building. The development would not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 4.3.8 Paragraph 143 of the NPPF states the five purposes of the Green Belt. In my opinion, the development does not contradict with any of the five purposes. Given the above, the proposal is not inappropriate development in accordance with Section 13 of the NPPF and is therefore compliant with Policy SP5 of the Local Plan.

Unlawful development:

- 4.3.9 The development was carried out after a Lawful Development Certificate was sought for the erection of an incidental gym/office; however, the outbuilding is currently being used as an ancillary annexe. Therefore, the current development is unlawful and this application seeks planning permission to regularise the development.

Design and Appearance:

- 4.3.10 Policy D1 of the Local Plan requires that development proposals respond positively to the site's local context. Policy D2 of the Local Plan requires extensions to houses and outbuildings to incorporate a design that is sympathetic to the main dwelling in terms of its scale, form and orientation and does not harm the character and appearance of the locality around the site. These policies are broadly consistent with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.3.11 The outbuilding was initially built to dimensions acceptable under permitted development rights, uses timber cladding and is clearly subservient to the main dwelling. No external changes have occurred to enable the conversion of the building. Its use would be consistent with the residential use of the main dwelling.
- 4.3.12 Regarding the fence surrounding the outbuilding, as previously stated, while this gives the appearance of a separate curtilage for the annexe robust justification has been provided for its retention and it would not be visible from the public realm.

- 4.3.13 The development is therefore considered to be in compliance with Policies D1, D2 and HS6 of the Local Plan and the core principles set out within Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties:

- 4.3.14 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.
- 4.3.15 The use of the building as an annexe is not considered to amount to an increase in noise generation when compared to the prior use, for an office/gym to serve the needs of the occupants of the dwelling. The lack of enlargement of the building is not considered to harm the amenities of neighbouring occupants. Given the appropriate siting and scale of the outbuilding, it is not considered that the existing development causes such harm to neighbour amenity as to be objectionable in terms of over-dominance, shading or loss of privacy.
- 4.3.16 This development is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy D3 of the NHLP and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.17 The application site benefits from a large driveway which can accommodate well above the minimum requirement of 2no. parking spaces. Therefore, with regard to Policy T2 of the NHLP, no parking issues should arise from the proposal.

Environmental Implications

- 4.3.18 The proposed development is not large enough in scale to cause significant implications for the local environment in terms of carbon emissions and therefore would be generally in compliance with Section 14 of the NPPF.

Biodiversity Net Gain:

- 4.3.19 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 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 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.

2. The residential annexe hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwellinghouse known as 'Silvermead', Lower Titmore Green, Little Wymondley, Hitchin, SG4 7JT.

Reason: To avoid the creation of a new dwelling contrary to the planning policies applicable to the area and to avoid the occupation of two separate dwellings by persons unconnected with each other as this would result in an unsatisfactory relationship and inadequate standard of amenity for both properties and to comply with Policy HS6 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

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  Shaun Greaves Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 17 April 2026	

