

## DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

| APPLICATION<br>REFERENCE | BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF<br>DEVELOPMENT                                                                                                                                         | APPLICATION SITE                                          |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 25/00767/FPH             | Replacement of garage door with window to facilitate conversion of garage to habitable accommodation and installation of 2 ground floor windows in existing side elevation. | 18 Springhead Lane<br>Hitchin<br>Hertfordshire<br>SG4 0LJ |

### Submitted Plan Nos

1142 - 01 1142 - 02 1142 - 03 1142 - PL01 1142 - PL02

### 1.0 Policies

D1 Sustainable design

D2 House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild

D3 Protecting living conditions

T2 Parking

SECN12 Achieving well-designed places

SECN14 Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding

## 2.0 **Site History**

2.1 None relevant

## 3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Neighbour consultations** – None received.

## 4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The site is a semi-detached, three-storey dwelling on the south side of Spring Road, Hitchin. The site benefits from a garage, driveway, and rear garden.

## 4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Replacement of garage door with window to facilitate conversion of garage to habitable accommodation and installation of 2 ground floor windows in existing side elevation.

## 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 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.

### Design

- 4.3.2 Policy D1 of the Local Plan requires that development proposals respond positively to the site's local context, retain existing vegetation and minimise the visual impact of street furniture and parking provision. Policy D2 of the Local Plan requires extensions to houses to incorporate 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.
- 4.3.3 The proposed garage conversion would see the garage door removed and 1no. front elevation, ground floor window and 2no. side elevation, ground floor windows inserted. The external materials would match existing
- 4.3.4 The proposal does not benefit from a permitted development fallback position as permitted development rights Classes A-B have been removed. While the application site is part of a set of 2no. pairs of uniform semi-detached dwellings, the streetscene is not one dimensional and has multiple dwelling types. Additionally, no.22 Springhead

Lane, the equivalent dwelling on the neighbouring pair of semi-detached dwellings has 2no. ground floor side elevations windows. As such, it is not considered that the proposed garage conversion would cause unacceptable harm to the character of the dwelling or the streetscene as to be objectionable. It is my view that, while the proposed development would be a departure from the uniformity of these pairs of semi-detached dwellings, it would not be considered unacceptable due to the varied streetscene and limited number of dwellings of similar style to the application dwelling.

- 4.3.5 This is considered to be in line with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies D1, D2 and D3 of the Local Plan.

#### Impact on Neighbours

- 4.3.6 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.
- 4.3.7 While the proposal would slightly unbalance the semi-detached pair, it is not considered that the proposed front and side elevation windows would cause such harm to the character of the dwelling and streetscene as to be objectionable. Additionally, as the windows are all ground-floor level and look out towards either the highway or the driveway, there would be no harm in terms of over-looking and loss of privacy.
- 4.3.8 This development is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy D3 of the NHLP and Section 12 of the NPPF.

#### Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.9 The proposal does not include an increase in the number of bedrooms; however, the conversion of the garage would reduce the on-site parking provision. The site would retain sufficient on-site parking for a minimum of 2no. spaces. So, with regard to Policy T2 of the NHLP, there would be no car parking issues arising from the development.

#### Environmental Implications

4.3.10 The proposed development would be consistent with the criteria set out in Policy D1 of the NHLP '*Sustainable Design*'. There are no other significant environmental implications as a result of the proposed development.

#### Biodiversity Net Gain:

4.3.11 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 The proposed development is considered acceptable and in accordance Policies D1, D2, D3, T2 of the NHLP 2011-2031 and Sections 12 and 14 of the NPPF.

#### 4.5 **Alternative Options**

4.5.1 None.

#### 4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

4.6.1 None.

#### 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.

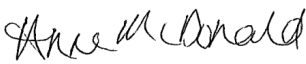
Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of permission.

3. The extension(s) hereby permitted shall be built in external materials to match the existing dwellinghouse unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA.

Reason: To protect the visual amenities of the locality and to comply with Policies D1 and D2 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.

|                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <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> 15 May 2025</p>                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                 |