

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/02002/FPH	Installation of grasscrete driveway and dropped kerb	158 Pixmore Way Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 1QS

Submitted Plan Nos

Location Plan Existing Site Plan Propsoed Site Plan Existing Section Proposed Section

1.0 Policies

D1	Sustainable design
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D3	Protecting living conditions
T1	Assessment of transport matters
T2	Parking
SECN9	Promoting sustainable transport
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN14	Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding

2.0 **Site History**

- 2.1 19/02084/FPH - Single storey rear extension and ancillary works (as a variation of planning permission 19/01133/FPH granted on 12 July 2019).

Conditional Permission

- 2.2 19/01133/FPH - Single storey rear extension.

Conditional Permission

3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 **Neighbour consultations** – None received.

- 3.2 **Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation** – None received.

3.3 **Area Highway Development Control Manager – Objection.**

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The application site accommodates a semi-detached, two-storey dwelling situated on Pixmore Way, Letchworth Garden City and resides within the Letchworth Conservation Area. The site benefits from a driveway and front and rear gardens.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Installation of grasscrete driveway and dropped kerb.

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. This policy is broadly consistent with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 4.3.3 The proposed grasscrete driveway would measure 5.1m in width and 5.1m in depth; thereby, fully replacing the surface area of the existing soft landscape garden. Other examples of grasscrete can be seen in the immediate locality and it is considered an acceptable material for the proposed driveway.
- 4.3.4 The proposal includes a dropped kerb which is discussed in the *Highways and Parking* section.
- 4.3.5 In my view, the scale of the proposed works is minor and would improve accessibility for disabled parking. The proposed design and materials are considered sympathetic to the dwelling and wider street scene and would not result in an adverse effect on the character of the dwelling or the streetscene.
- 4.3.6 This is considered to be in line with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy D1 of the Local Plan.

Heritage Impact

- 4.3.7 There are other examples of grasscrete in the immediate locality and the material is considered acceptable. It is not considered that the proposal would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Impact on Neighbours

- 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 It is not considered that the proposal would cause harm to neighbour amenity, as to be objectionable, in terms of dominance, shading or loss of privacy.
- 4.3.10 This development is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy D3 of the NHLP and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.11 The proposal does not include an increase in the number of bedrooms. Therefore, with regard to Policy T2 of the NHLP, there would be no car parking issues arising from the development.

4.3.12 The Highways Authority have objected to the proposed dropped kerb, providing the following recommendation:

Notice is given under article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority recommends that permission be refused because the proposal is contrary to the Council's Residential Dropped Kerbs Policy (Version 6, dated 10th September 2025).

4.3.13 The reasons given for the objection are as follows:

- *The required full depth of five metres can only be achieved in this instance through overhanging the public highway by approximately 1m. The Highway Authority has a duty to protect land which has been designated as a common asset, and is not willing to allow public land to be appropriated for private use.*
- *There is evidence of a utilities trench in this part of the highway, which would further complicate any attempt to re-purpose the land for private use.*
- *[The proposal] would constitute a potential obstruction to the public highway and may compromise safety and access to essential infrastructure.*
- *Although the current proposal avoids the prohibited zone of 2m around the stem, it would fall within the tree's root protection area of approximately 17m.*

4.3.14 Despite negotiations showcasing precedent in the area and special circumstances, the Highways Authority maintain the position *that these factors [are] outweighed by the wider harm caused by the potential loss of public assets, compromising of highway safety and reduction of vegetation in the public realm, as detailed above.*

4.3.15 Therefore, the proposal fails to comply with Policy T1 of the NHLP, Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC) Local Transport Plan-4 (2018-2031, May 2018), and Section 9, paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024).

Environmental Implications

4.3.16 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:

4.3.17 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 **REFUSED**.

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 **REFUSED** for the following reasons:

1. The proposal fails to comply with Policy T1 of the NHLP, Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC) Local Transport Plan-4 (2018-2031, May 2018), and Section 9, paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024).

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been refused for this proposal for the clear reasons set out in this decision notice. The Council acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant in an attempt to narrow down the reasons for refusal but fundamental objections could not be overcome. 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: 27 November 2025	