

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Andrew Hunter.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/01061/FP	Change of use of first floor of existing outbuilding to a studio holiday let/annexe and enlargement of three dormer windows (Development and change of use already carried out).	Pirton Court 1 Priors Hill Pirton Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 3QA

Submitted Plan Nos

03 01 02

1.0 Policies

CGB1	Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt.
CGB4	Exist buildings in the RA Beyond GB
D1	Sustainable design
D2	House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild
D3	Protecting living conditions
ETC8	Tourism
HE1	Designated heritage assets
NE3	The Chilterns AONB
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN15	Conserve + enhance natural environment
SECN16	Conserve + enhance historic environment
SECN9	Promoting sustainable transport

SP12	Green infrastructure, landscape and biod
SP13	Historic environment
SP5	Countryside and Green Belt
SP6	Sustainable transport
SP9	Design and Sustainability
T2	Parking

Pirton Neighbourhood Plan
Policies PNP 3, PNP 8, PNP 13

2.0 Relevant Site History

- 2.1 19/02417/NMA - Insertion of six rooflights (as Non-Material Amendment of Planning permission 18/00760/FPH granted 23.05.2018) – Approved 08/11/19.
- 2.2 18/00760/FPH - Erection of detached garage and storage building including home office at first floor level (as amended by drawings 171174B/001B, 002B and 003B received 22/05/2018) – Approved 23/05/18.
- 2.3 The site has also been subject to other applications not relevant to this application.

3.0 Representations

- 3.1 **Environmental Health Officer** – No objections.

4.0 Planning Considerations

- 4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The site is a large outbuilding with a pitched roof within the large grounds of detached two storey dwelling Pirton Court. The outbuilding is set back from public highway Priors Hill, and has a vehicular access onto it. One dwelling adjoins the site to the NW. The site is in rural surroundings, although is close to the village of Pirton.
- 4.1.2 The site is in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt, and outside the Pirton settlement boundary. The majority of the site is in a Conservation Area. The site is in the Chilterns Area of Natural Beauty (AONB).

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 The application is retrospective. It's for the change of use of the first floor of the outbuilding from a home office and unused space to a one bedroom holiday let/annexe, and the enlargement of three dormer windows on the SW side elevation.

4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key material considerations are whether the proposal is acceptable in principle, design, neighbour amenity, and parking.

Principle

- 4.3.2 The site is in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt (RA). Policy CGB1 d) of the Local Plan concerns proposals relating to existing rural buildings. Policy CGB4 of the adopted Local Plan provides more details in relation to CGB1 d), stating:

a) Planning permission for the re-use, replacement or extension of buildings in the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt will be granted provided that:

b) Any existing building to be converted for re-use does not require major extension or reconstruction;

c) The resultant building(s) do not have a materially greater impact on the openness, purposes or general policy aims of the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt than the original building(s); and

d) Any outbuilding(s) are sited as close as possible to the main building(s) and visually subordinate to them.

- 4.3.3 The new replacement dormers are wider and higher than those originally approved, having each been increased in width from approx. 1.5m to 2.4m, and in height from 1.9m to 2.4m.
- 4.3.4 While the dormers are larger individually and cumulatively, it's not considered that they visually dominate the side roof slope of the building, and overall do not have much greater impacts on the building and rural locality than those originally approved. Furthermore due to the location of the dormers and the outbuilding which have limited visibility from public views, the general policy aims of the Rural Area are not harmed by the enlarged dormers. The dormers are considered acceptable in principle.

- 4.3.5 The change of use of the first floor to a holiday let/annexe is the other aspect of the proposal. The only external alterations to the building in association with the change of use is the enlarged dormers. These dormers are not considered to have been major extension or reconstruction of the existing building. The scale and impacts of the holiday let/annexe are small and within a wider residential plot, where impacts are considered to 'blend in' with the wider residential use, and the new use is not considered to conflict with Rural Area policies. There would also be minor benefits from the additional tourist accommodation provided. The proposal is acceptable in principle. The proposal complies with Policies SP5, CGB1 and CGB4 of the Local Plan, and the Pirton Neighbourhood Plan.

Design

- 4.3.6 The enlarged dormers are considered to remain small individually and cumulatively, and do not detract from the side roof slope of the outbuilding and the outbuilding as a whole, the site and the locality.
- 4.3.7 The change of use is small in scale and in its impacts on the site and locality, and is not an uncommon use for outbuildings of dwellings with larger landholdings in rural areas such as where the site is. The development is not considered harmful to the significance of the Conservation Area, or harmful to the AONB. The design is acceptable. The proposal complies with Policies D1, D2, NE3 and HE1 of the Local Plan; and Sections 12, 13 and 16 of the NPPF, and the Pirton Neighbourhood Plan.

Neighbour amenity

- 4.3.8 The dormers are on an elevation of the outbuilding that are furthest from the closest dwelling No. 3 Priors Hill to the NE, and also completely obscured from that dwelling by the roof of the outbuilding. The dormers provide views over land owned by the applicant, therefore the dormers are not harmful to amenity.
- 4.3.9 The openings serving the holiday let/annexe use do not face towards No. 3 and do not cause overlooking and loss of privacy/amenity. The amount of noise, traffic and other disturbance from the use would be small, and due to the distance of the outbuilding from No. 3 and other dwellings the use is not considered harmful. Impacts on amenity are considered acceptable. The proposal complies with Policy D3 of the Local Plan, and the Pirton Neighbourhood Plan.

Parking

- 4.3.10 The Council does not have parking standards for holiday let uses. The outbuilding however has a paved parking area that could accommodate four cars, garages that could accommodate a further six cars, and additional space near the building that could be used for parking. The use is considered to have sufficient parking, and sufficient parking also remains for main dwelling Pirton Court. The proposal complies with Policy T2 of the Local Plan.

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**.

5.0 **Recommendation**

5.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED** unconditionally.

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