

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/01793/FP	Single storey extension to existing east elevation.	Units 1 - 5 Rear Of 93-95 Bancroft Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 1NQ

Submitted Plan Nos

3988 01A Location Plan 3988 02A 3988 03A 3988 04B 3988 05A

1.0 Policies

SECN5	Meeting the challenge of Climate Change
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SECN14	Achieving well-designed places
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SECN20 Conserving+enhancing historic environmnt

SP9 Design and Sustainability

SP13 Historic environment

D1 Sustainable design

HE1 Designated heritage assets

T2 Parking

2.0 **Relevant Site History**

2.1 No relevant site history.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Site Notice and Neighbour Consultation** – 3no. comments received in objection. Including: Local Residents (C/O CareRx Pharmacy), Rightpharm Ltd, 3 The Aspens. Comments summarised below:

- ☐ Object to the potential loss of the pharmacy and NHS services.

3.2 **Central East Integrated Care Board** – Neutral – supports the continuation of NHS services at the site.

3.3 **Community Pharmacy Hertfordshire** – Neutral – requests clarification on current use on site/ if the proposal would retain Class E use; supports the continuation of NHS and community pharmacy services.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The site accommodates Units 1-5 to the rear of 93-95 Bancroft, which includes CareRx Pharmacy to the ground floor, and residential units to the upper floors.
- 4.1.2 The site itself is of modern construction and is located within the same courtyard as the entrance to Sainsburys/ Sainsburys car park. The site is within the Hitchin Conservation Area and backs on to several Listed Buildings situated on Bancroft.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 The application proposes a single storey extension to existing east elevation of the unit.
- 4.2.2 The submitted plans show a re-configuration of the internal layout to provide 3no. commercial units. The internal alterations and use of the premises are not considerations under this application for a single storey extension.

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 locality and historic environment;
 - The impact that the proposed development would have on the living conditions of neighbouring properties;
 - The impact that the proposed development would have on highway safety and car parking provision;
 - The impact of the proposal upon the natural environment, including Biodiversity Net Gain.

Design, Appearance and Impact on the Historic Environment:

- 4.3.2 Policies SP9 and D1 of the NHLP state the importance of sustainable development, and that new proposals should respond positively to local character. These policies are broadly consistent with Section 14 of the NPPF.

- 4.3.3 Policy HE1 emphasises how permission will be refused where proposals would cause substantial harm or a loss of significance to a Heritage Asset - in this case, the Hitchin Conservation Area, and neighbouring Listed Buildings along Bancroft - and permission should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal is necessary to deliver considerable public benefits to outweigh this harm or loss. Policy SP13 emphasises how great weight will be given to the potential harms to the significance of heritage assets, seeking their conservation and management of their setting. These policies comply with the LPA's statutory duty under sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and are broadly commensurate with Chapter 20 of the NPPF.
- 4.3.4 The proposed single storey, flat roof extension would be positioned in front of the existing access on the east elevation. The extension would have a depth of 3.8m, a width of 6.5m, and a height of 3.6m. The design would mimic the existing east elevation in design and would be constructed of brick with aluminium shopfronts to match existing. Thus, the extension would relate to the existing design character and would not have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the Hitchin Conservation Area.
- 4.3.5 While the site is within the Hitchin Conservation Area and backs on to Listed Buildings along Bancroft, Units 1-5 are of modern construction and form their own context alongside Sainsburys. The extension would face into the Sainsburys car park and be positioned within the corner of the existing building, meaning that views from Bancroft would be limited and the extension would not have a negative impact upon the significance of the neighbouring Listed Buildings along Bancroft.
- 4.3.6 The proposed development is therefore considered to be in compliance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policies D1, HE1, SP9 and SP13 of the NHLP and the core principles set out within Sections 14 and 20 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties:

- 4.3.7 Policy D3 of the NHLP permits development that does not result in unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and where necessary encourages the use of mitigation measures to reduce these impacts. This is generally reflected by the provisions within the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.3.8 Due to the appropriate scale and siting of the proposal at ground floor level, it is considered that the extension would not have an adverse impact upon the occupiers of the upper floor residential units regarding overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impacts. Therefore, the proposal complies with Policy D3 of the NHLP.

Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.9 The site is within a highly sustainable location within the Hitchin Town Centre and would not interfere with the existing access arrangements. The proposal therefore complies with Policy T2 of the NHLP.

Climate Change:

- 4.3.10 Policy D1 of the NHLP outlines the Council's commitment to supporting climate change mitigation. The proposed development is not large enough in scale to cause significant implications for the local environment in terms of carbon emissions and therefore complies with Policy D1 of the NHLP and Chapter 5 of the NPPF.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):

- 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.

Other Matters:

- 4.3.12 Concerns have been raised about the potential loss of the pharmacy services currently in operation. The continued tenancy of CareRx is not a planning consideration for the purposes of this application, but a separate issue. Maintaining a commercial tenancy cannot be considered under an application for an extension and the Use Class is unlikely to change with the altered internal layout. This application is for a single storey extension only.

4.4 Conclusion

- 4.4.1 The proposed development is considered acceptable and complies with both local and national planning policies.

4.5 Alternative Options

- 4.5.1 None applicable.

5.0 Recommendation

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

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	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts
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Determining Officer	SG6 3JF
Date: 21 September 2026	