

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Alex Howard.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/00388/FPH	Two storey side extension and single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory. Installation of front access steps, hard landscaping works and alterations to fenestration. Erection of replacement detached garage (as amended by plan received 26th June 2025).	18 Stake Piece Road Royston Hertfordshire SG8 9DN

Submitted Plan Nos

Location Plan AB001LJ Existing Site Plan ABB001LJ Proposed Site Plan. AB001LJ Existing and Proposed Ground Floor Plans. AB001LJ Existing and Proposed First Floor Plans AB001LJ Existing Front and Rear Elevations. AB001LJ Proposed Front and Rear Elevations AB001LJ Existing and Proposed Side Elevations. AB001LJ Existing and Proposed Garage Plans and Elevations AB001LJ-1 Proposed Side Elevations

1.0 **Policies**

D1	Sustainable design
D2	House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild
D3	Protecting living conditions
NE4	Biodiversity and geological sites
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places

2.0 **Planning History**

2.1 N/A.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Site Notice and Neighbour Consultation** – comments received from 5 neighbours, 3 neutral and 2 objections, raising the following matters (summary):

- Access rights must be maintained when the proposal is completed, as per the deeds.
- Concerns over access to neighbouring properties when this proposal is being constructed, given the narrow nature of this road.
- No objections to the proposal but seek to ensure illegal use of the Heath SSSI for access, storage and loss of vegetation cannot happen again. Recommended condition wording to protect the SSSI to ensure biodiversity is protected.

3.2 **Royston Town Council** – None received.

3.3 **Therfield and Heath Conservators** – *“No objection to the proposal, but request that NHC impose planning conditions to ensure the damage already done to the SSSI and LNR by the owners of 18 Stake Piece Road are remedied and not allowed to re-occur. Specifically:*

Pre-Commencement Planning Conditions:

- 1. The Applicant must remove from the Heath / SSSI / LNR the waste material they (or their contractors) have tipped;*
- 2. The Applicant must propose and complete a plan of mitigations to remediate the damage they have already done to the site in agreement with the Conservators and Natural England*

Planning Condition:

- 3. No materials, debris, pollutants, vehicles or machinery associated with this development site shall be stored or used within, leached into, or access the development through, the Wildlife Site (Ref 03/001 Therfield Heath).*

N.B. The planning condition (number 3 above) is the same as NHC handed down in application 09/00847/1 which was another application with likely impact on the LNR”.

3.4 **HCC Archaeology** – No comment.

3.5 **NHC Ecology** – “No objection.

Further to my original response to the above application I have now been made aware of damage that has occurred on the adjacent Therfield Heath SSSI. It would seem that the cause of the damage stems from actions associated with the applicant at 18 Stake Piece Rd. I find this disappointing and concerning that the value of a nationally significant site can be shown such contempt. As such I suggest that any future planning permission granted is accompanied by a Protective Measures condition, as set out in BS 42020: Biodiversity, to ensure due consideration and care is shown in relation to the SSSI and that the proposal results in no detrimental impact of this valuable natural asset.

No development, demolition, earth moving shall take place or material or machinery brought onto the site until details of protective fencing and warning signs to be erected on site to prevent entry to or damage to the Therfield Heath SSSI have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All protective fencing and warning signs will be maintained during the construction period in accordance with the approved details”.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The site is an end of terrace dwelling located on the southwest side of Stake Piece Road, Royston. Stake Piece Road comprises a main street with dwellings on either side of the highway, and a short access road on the southwest side between Nos 16 and 26, which leads to a terrace of four dwellings. The site is the most south of these four dwellings and benefits from a sizable plot with a large side and rear garden/driveway.
- 4.1.2 The site shares a boundary with Therfield Heath, which is registered Common Land and the majority of the site is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) as well as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR).

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Planning permission is sought for the erection of a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension, following demolition of existing conservatory. Installation of front

access steps, hard landscaping works and alterations to fenestration. Erection of replacement detached garage.

4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key considerations are design and the impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties.

Design

- 4.3.2 Policy D1 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted provided that development responds positively to the site's local context in addition to other criteria. Policy D2 of the Local Plan states that planning permission for house extensions will be granted if the extension is sympathetic to the existing house in height, form, proportions, roof type, window details, materials; the orientation of the main dwelling and if it does not dominate adjoining properties. These considerations are echoed in Section 12 of the NPPF.
- 4.3.3 The proposal incorporates several elements, the primary of such being the erection of a two storey side extension and single-storey rear extension. The two-storey side element will extend approx. 6.0m wide from the host dwelling, with matching eave heights, a slightly lower ridge line than the existing property, and a hipped roof, before extending approx. 6.9m deep. This would then connect to the proposed single-storey extension, measuring approx. 3.6m deep and 11.2m wide, with a lean-to roof measuring approx. 2.7m to eaves. The extensions would be finished in a light coloured render, plain tiles and white uPVC windows and doors. The proposal would also incorporate the installation of front access steps in a similar position to the existing steps, other hard landscaping works including a patio area around the property, changes to existing windows and doors on the property and the erection of a modest detached garage on the driveway, following removal of the existing garage. The garage will be flat roofed and finished in plain bricks.
- 4.3.4 It is considered that the design of the proposal is acceptable in planning terms. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed two storey side and single-storey rear extensions and cumulatively large additions to the host dwelling, the site occupies a large plot with large side/rear gardens which can accommodate an extension of this scale. Moreover, at the opposite end of this terrace of four dwellings, No.24 has a similar sized plot to the host dwelling and has undergone a similar sized extension to the proposal (ref: 15/01014/1HH) to the side and rear, such that it would be difficult to resist this scheme on this basis. Lastly, whilst a large cumulative extension, the proposal would see a recessed ridge line compared to the existing dwelling, match the eave heights, and would be built using matching materials, which will ensure an element of subservience and be sympathetic to the host dwelling. The other elements, namely the front steps, the hard landscaping works around the dwelling, changing the existing windows/doors to match the extension and the detached garage, are all modest elements and are considered acceptable. This dwelling is located at the end of a narrow access road which means it does not really contribute to any street scene at present, such that the proposal will not result in any harm to one.
- 4.3.5 The proposal is therefore deemed acceptable in design terms and in accordance with Policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbours

- 4.3.6 Policy D3 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions.
- 4.3.7 The property benefits from one attached neighbour at No.20, and other detached neighbours to the northeast at No's 8-10. It is considered that given the size and location of the proposal, where the two-storey element is a substantial distance from any neighbours, and the modest height of the single-storey extension which would be approx. 2.0m from the shared boundary and be of modest height, as well as the modest nature and scale of remaining development, the scheme is unlikely to result in any material harm to the reasonable living conditions and well-being of neighbours, with respect to overlooking, loss of privacy and loss of daylight/sunlight.
- 4.3.8 Therefore, the proposal will not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions, in line with Policy D3 of the Local Plan.

Biodiversity Net Gain/Ecology

- 4.3.9 The proposal is exempt from the mandatory 10% BNG.
- 4.3.10 The site shares a boundary with Therfield Heath, which is registered Common Land and the majority of the site is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) as well as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR). The Council are aware of some construction works that have been undertaken at the site prior to this decision, where the Heath was being used for access/storage and saw the removal of some vegetation, without the consent from the Heath Conservators or Natural England. This has naturally seen a number of interested parties raise concerns about the future protection of The Heath, including the Councils Ecologist, the local Councillor for Royston, The Heath Conservators, Natural England, and some neighbours to the site. Following careful consideration with Officers of the Council and interested parties; in order to protect the neighbouring Heath from further damage during construction, a pre-commencement condition will be enforced on this decision which reads as follows:

No development, demolition, earth moving shall take place or material or machinery brought onto the site until details of protective fencing and warning signs to be erected on site to prevent entry to or damage to the Therfield Heath SSSI have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All protective fencing and warning signs will be maintained during the construction period in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to protect the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) from any damage resulting from the building operations associated with this development, in accordance with Policy NE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031.

- 4.3.11 This condition will ensure that development cannot commence until details of how the Heath will be protected from further harm is submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA, in consultation with relevant consultees. This is considered reasonable and has been agreed by the applicant. Whilst I note that interested parties have requested that the applicant remediate the damage they have caused to the Heath, this would not be

reasonable under this planning application because the area in question is outside the red line area, so we have no control over it. It is also noted that other bodies, including Natural England and the Heath Conservators, may have other powers to enforce the remediation measures for the area in question. Overall, subject to the above condition, it is considered that The Heath will be satisfactorily protected from construction related impacts, in line with Policy NE1 of the Local Plan.

Other Matters

- 4.3.12 The concerns relating to maintaining access rights on this site by the neighbouring property are civil matters and not for the LPA to consider under a planning application. The concerns relating to concerns over access during construction have been considered in full, given the site's narrow constraints, but seeing as this is a householder application it would be unreasonable to request the submission of a Construction Management Plan/Method Statement, as these tend to be used for larger scale developments.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposal is considered acceptable in planning terms and in accordance with Policies D1, D2 and D3 of the Local Plan, as well as Section 12 of the NPPF.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 N/A

4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 The applicant agrees to the proposed pre-commencement condition.

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 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.

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

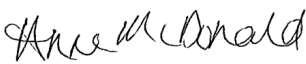
Reason: To protect the visual amenities of the locality and to comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

4. No development, demolition, earth moving shall take place or material or machinery brought onto the site until details of protective fencing and warning signs to be erected on site to prevent entry to or damage to the Therfield Heath SSSI have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All protective fencing and warning signs will be maintained during the construction period in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: to protect the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) from any damage resulting from the building operations associated with this development, in accordance with Policy NE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2031.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. The Council acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. 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: 26 June 2025	