

Planning Statement

Householder application

Single storey extension

The Cottage, 73 Park Lane, Knebworth, SG3 6PP

DLA Ref: 25/231

May 2025

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1.0 Background

1.1.1 This report relates to a householder application for single storey extensions at The Cottage, 73 Park Lane, Knebworth.

1.2.0 Scope

1.2.1 This document comprises an overarching Planning Report. Sections 2 to 4 consider the physical, economic, social and historical context of the site, identifying the relevant local, regional and national planning policy framework; and Section 5 sets out the details of the proposal. All these sections inform the evaluation of the proposal in Section 6 against the identified planning policy framework. The overall conclusions are set out in Section 7 and which are summarised below at paragraph 1.3.0.

1.3.0 Summary

1.3.1 The original building on the site has not previously been extended, the resulting increase in the property would be no greater than 50%, a figure well below what the Council have previously deemed acceptable in the Green Belt. The scheme would therefore be in accordance with the exemption of inappropriate development in the Green Belt as set out in Paragraph 154(c) of the NPPF.

1.3.2 The extension is a proportionate increase that is in keeping with the design of the main dwelling, retaining the same roof structure, design, fenestration and external materials.

1.3.3 The extension would improve the standard of accommodation for future occupiers of the site and would not cause undue harm to neighbouring occupiers.

1.3.4 The scheme would not cause any impacts in terms of parking or highway safety.

2.0 SITE & CONTEXT ANALYSIS

2.1.0 Location

- 2.1.1 The site, shown in Figure 1 below, is located to the south of Park Lane, to the east of the A1(M) in between Old Knebworth and Knebworth villages.



Figure 1 - Site location

2.2.0 Application Site

- 2.2.1 The application site contains The Cottage, a former outbuilding that was granted a certificate of lawfulness under reference 24/01662/LDCE as a self-contained dwelling. This single storey dwelling also has consent under reference 24/02401/LDCP for the conversion of the adjoining garage into residential floorspace.

2.3.0 Planning Constraints

- 2.3.1 The only planning designation upon the site is that it is located within the Green Belt. The site is not within a Conservation Area, not within Flood Zones 2 or 3, and there are no Listed Buildings in the immediate vicinity of the site.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1.0 Application Site

3.1.1 The relevant history of the application site is summarised in Figure 3.1.0 below.

LPA Ref	Proposal	Outcome
24/01662/LDCE	Certificate of Lawfulness for the existing use of the outbuilding as a self-contained residential unit	Approved
24/02399/PNAA	Enlargement of detached bungalow by the construction of an additional storey to result in an overall height of 6.45 metres.	Approved
24/02401/LDCP	Replace 3no garage doors with windows to facilitate conversion of existing detached garage into habitable accommodation	Approved
24/02400/LDCP	Erection of single storey side and rear extension	Approved

4.0 **POLICY CONTEXT**

4.1.0 **National Policy / Guidance**

4.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024, sets out the Government’s planning policies for England. It is considered that sections 11 (Making effective use of land), 12 (Achieving well-design places), 13 (Protecting Green Belt land) are considered directly relevant.

4.2.0 **North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031**

Policy No.	Title
D1	Sustainable design
S2	House extensions, replacement dwellings and outbuildings
D3	Protecting living conditions
T2	Parking
SP5	Countryside and Green Belt

4.3.0 **Knebworth Neighbourhood Plan – adopted March 2022**

Policy No	Title
KBDS1	Knebworth Village Character
KBLE5	Home Working
KBBE4	Design

5.0 DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

5.1.0 Use

- 5.1.1 The application would retain the existing C3 residential use, however would provide a better standard of accommodation for future occupiers.

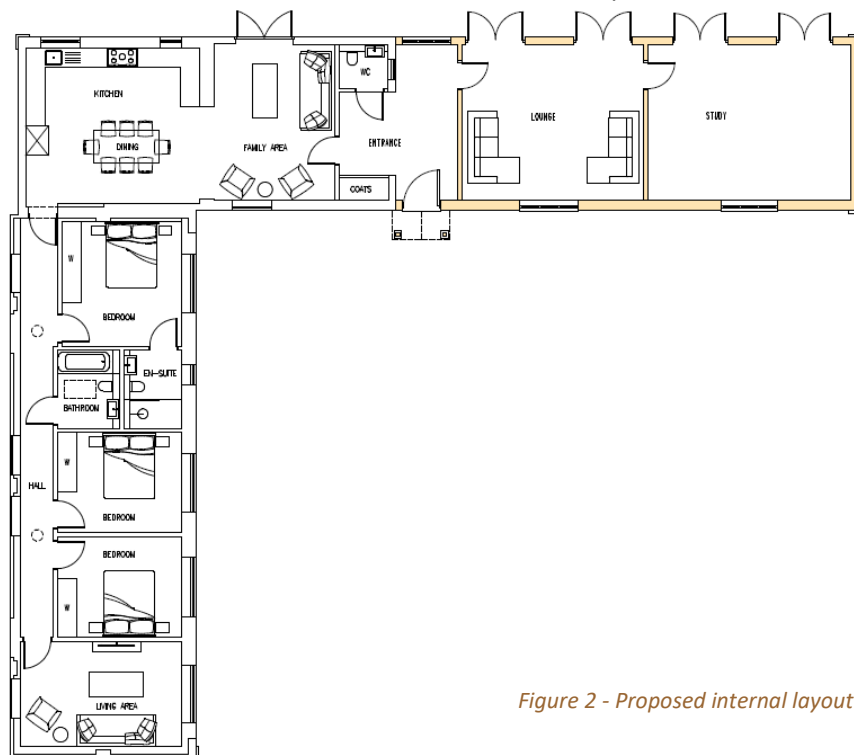


Figure 2 - Proposed internal layout

5.2.0 Layout

- 5.2.1 As shown in Figure 2 above, the proposed extension would result in the creation of a new lounge and study to the main dwelling. The extension would be located from the front elevation, running parallel with Park Road. There would also be alterations to the porch and main entrance of the property to face Park Road.

5.3.0 Appearance & Scale

- 5.3.1 The extension would be single storey in size, retaining the same eaves and ridge height as the existing dwelling as well as using the same materials. The extension would visually appear as a continuation of the existing part of the dwelling that runs parallel with Park Road.

5.4.0 Landscaping

- 5.4.1 The scheme would result in no changes to the existing landscaping arrangements on the site. Any further landscaping could be provided via condition if considered necessary by the LPA.

5.5.0 **Access & Parking**

5.5.1 The scheme would result in no changes to the parking or access arrangements for the site, with the access being retained onto Park Lane and there being an area for parking in front of the dwelling.

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

Based on the analysis set out in Sections 2 to 5, I consider that the application proposal raises the following issues, which I will consider in turn below:

1. Principle
2. Layout & Design
3. Highway Safety & Access

6.1.0 **Issue No 1: Principle**

- 6.1.1 As noted in 2.3.0 of this report, the site is located within the Green Belt wherein there is a presumption against inappropriate development. Chapter 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) notes that great importance should be attached to the Green Belt and that the main aim of Green Belt policy is to keep land permanently open. Paragraph 154 states that inappropriate development should not be approved, however does go on to list a number of exceptions. One of these, at Paragraph 154(c) is *“the extension or alteration of a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building”*. Policy SP5 of the District Local Plan takes the view that the Council *“Will only permit development proposals in the Green Belt where they would not result in inappropriate development or where very special circumstances have been demonstrated”*.
- 6.1.2 The existing dwelling on the site has an existing footprint of 135m² and has not previously been extended. The proposed extension to the property would result in an increase in footprint of 67.5m². This would therefore result in an increase of no greater than 50% from the size of the original dwelling. Given this extension is a low-profile single storey and is a relatively modest increase being no more than 50%, it is considered to be an extension that is not a disproportionate addition over the size of the original building. This is a figure well below what has previously been considered acceptable in North Herts within the Green Belt. A recent example is an approval in close proximity to the application site, at Slip Cottage, Slip Lane, Old Knebworth, which under application reference 23/01599/FPH the Officers Report stated *“the cumulative additions would enlarge the original dwelling by approximately 75%. It is acknowledged that this would significantly enlarge the dwelling, however, I would consider that this sits at the fringe between disproportionate and proportionate. Furthermore, given the low height of the proposed enlargements and their visual subordination to the original dwelling I consider that the works are suitably proportionate to the original dwelling”*. The officer report is provided in full at appendix DLA1.
- 6.1.3 In summary, as the original building on the site has not previously been extended, the resulting increase in the property would be no greater than 50%. This is a figure well below what the Council have previously deemed acceptable, and would therefore demonstrate that the extension is not disproportionate to the original building. The scheme would therefore be in accordance with the exemption of inappropriate development in the Green Belt as set out in Paragraph 154(c) of the NPPF.

6.2.0 Issue No 2: Layout & Design

- 6.2.1 Policy D1 of the Local Plan states that development will be granted provided the design of the development appropriately and positively responds to the site's local context together with other criteria to encourage a positive and sustainable form of development. Policy D2 of the Local Plan requires extensions to houses and the erection or replacement of buildings 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. Knebworth Neighbourhood Plan contains policies KBDS1 which requires development to respect or enhance the special character of the village and KBBE4 which requires all development to demonstrate good design. These policies are broadly consistent with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 6.2.2 The proposed development effectively seeks to extend the existing front gable, that runs parallel with Park Road. The extension would be a complementary build, matching the same roof pitch, design, fenestration and materials of the main dwelling. The extension would be of a proportionate scale of the development results in the development being in-keeping with the host dwelling and would therefore preserve the character and appearance of the street scene. The extension would also provide a better standard of accommodation for future occupiers, and would not cause undue harm to neighbouring occupiers given the significant distances to any neighbouring boundaries.
- 6.2.3 The proposed development is therefore considered to be in compliance with Policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan, policies KBDS1 and KBBE4 of the Neighbourhood Plan and the core principles set out within Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The design and appearance are therefore acceptable.

6.3.0 Issue No 3: Highway Safety & Access

- 6.3.1 The application proposals would not result in any alterations to the access or parking arrangements on the site. The dwelling would retain 3 car parking spaces to the front of the property, with sufficient space to manoeuvre and exit the site in a forward gear.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

7.1.0 Background

7.1.1 This report relates to a householder planning application for a single storey extension at The Cottage, 73 Park Lane, Knebworth. The proposal is promoted in the following circumstances:

- The original building on the site has not previously been extended, with the resulting increase in the property being no greater than 50%.
- This is a figure well below what the Council have previously deemed acceptable, and would therefore demonstrate an extension that is not disproportionate to the original building.
- The scheme would therefore be in accordance with the exemption of inappropriate development in the Green Belt as set out in Paragraph 154(c) of the NPPF.
- The extension is a proportionate increase that is in keeping with the design of the main dwelling, retaining the same roof structure, design, fenestration and external materials.
- The extension would improve the standard of accommodation for future occupiers of the site and would not cause undue harm to neighbouring occupiers.
- The scheme would not cause any impacts in terms of parking or highway safety.

8.0 **APPENDICES**

DLA1 – Officer report for planning application 23/01599/FPH at Slip Cottage, Slip Lane, Old Knebworth

DLA1

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Thomas Howe.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
23/01599/FPH	Part two storey and part single storey rear extension	Slip Cottage Slip Lane Old Knebworth Hertfordshire SG3 6QG

Submitted Plan Nos

5746-OS1 5746-OS2 5746-E01 5746-P01A

1.0 Policies

D1	Sustainable design
D2	House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild
D3	Protecting living conditions

T2	Parking
SP5	Countryside and Green Belt
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN13	Protecting Green Belt Land
SECN14	Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding

2.0 **Site History**

- 2.1 82/01641/1 - Erection of extension to old detached garage and reroofing to form first floor storeroom. Formation of additional vehicular access on to Slip Lane. – Conditional Permission
- 2.2 82/00780/1 - Erection of two and single storey rear extension. – Conditional Permission
- 2.3 82/00398/1 - Erection of front entrance porch. – Conditional Permission
- 2.4 Various applications for erection of a dwelling (Refused) and outbuildings within the land.

3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 **Neighbour Consultation** – None received.
- 3.2 **Parish Council** – No representation.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 Slip Cottage comprises a detached dwelling within a large plot to the south of Slip Lane near to Old Knebworth. The site is within the Conservation Area and the Green Belt.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Planning Permission is sought for the erection of a part single and part two storey rear 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 character and appearance of the area.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on the living conditions of neighbouring properties.

- The impact that the proposed development would have on car parking provision in the area.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on the environment.

Impact on Green Belt:

- 4.3.2 Chapter 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) notes that great importance should be attached to the Green Belt and that the main aim of Green Belt policy is to keep land permanently open. Paragraph 145 states that inappropriate development should not be approved. Paragraph 145 goes on to states that *"a local planning authority should regard the construction of new building as inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions to this are: the extension or alteration of a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building"*
- 4.3.3 The NPPF states that the Green Belt serves five purposes:
- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 4.3.4 Policy 2 of the District Local Plan takes the view that *"Except for proposals within settlements which accord with Policy 3, or in very special circumstances, planning permission will only be granted for new buildings, extensions, and changes of use of buildings and of land which are appropriate in the Green Belt, and which would not result in significant visual impact."* Policy SP5 of the Emerging District Local Plan takes the view that *"Will only permit development proposals in the Green Belt where they would not result in inappropriate development or where very special circumstances have been demonstrated"*.
- 4.3.5 When examining the site history, it is evident that the dwelling benefits from a front porch and a single and two storey rear extension together with outbuildings. The original dwelling comprised approximately 157 sqm in floor area and at present, the dwelling is approximately 247 sqm. The proposed enlargements are approximately 32 sqm in area. Therefore, the proposed development would enlarge the existing dwelling by approximately 11% and the cumulative additions would enlarge the original dwelling by approximately 75%. It is acknowledged that this would significantly enlarge the dwelling, however, I would consider that this sits at the fringe between disproportionate and proportionate. Furthermore, given the low height of the proposed enlargements and their visual subordination to the original dwelling I consider that the works are suitably proportionate to the original dwelling. This is however subject to the consideration that further enlargements would constitute inappropriate development and would be disproportionate. I do not consider that the proposed extensions would run contrary to the five purposes of the Green Belt and would therefore suitably comply with the provisions of the NPPF. Therefore, the works are acceptable on balance in the Green Belt.
- 4.3.6 Given the above, it is therefore considered that the proposed extension is considered to be acceptable with regards to its relationship with the Green Belt and is therefore compliant with Policy 3 of the District Local Plan, Chapter 13 of the NPPF and Policy SP5 of the Emerging District Local Plan.

Design and Appearance and Impact to Conservation Area:

- 4.3.7 Policy D1 of the Local Plan states that development will be granted provided the design of the development appropriately and positively responds to the site's local context together with other criteria to encourage a positive and sustainable form of development. Policy D2 of the Local Plan requires extensions to houses and the erection or replacement of buildings 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.
- 4.3.8 The proposed development effectively seeks to extend the existing rear gable and attached single storey extension to be level with the rear elevation of the existing rear two storey extension. During my visit it was indicated that the existing rear windows and roof tiles would be used on the proposed extension. I consider that the complementary built form and materials of construction together with the proportionate scale of the development results in the development being in-keeping with the host dwelling. The Old Knebworth Conservation Area appraisal does not site Slip Cottage as being a dwelling of significance or one that makes a contributions to the locality but details the importance of sympathetic materials and detailing to new development. I consider that the works suitably sit within the scope of this advice and would not harm the surrounding Conservation Area. The site abuts but is not within the Knebworth Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 4.3.9 The proposed development is therefore considered to be in compliance with Policies He1, D1 and D2 of the Local Plan and the core principles set out within Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The design and appearance are therefore acceptable.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties:

- 4.3.10 Policy D3 of the Local Plan permits development that does not result in unacceptable to 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.
- 4.3.11 The site is isolated, and the proposed development is set a significant distance from nearby neighbour properties. I therefore do not consider that the works would give rise to any dominance or overshadowing of neighbouring dwellings. There would be some visual impacts to users of Slip Lane to the south, however, given the rural nature of this road, I do not consider that the amenities of the public would be harmed. No neighbour objections received.
- 4.3.12 Given the above, it is considered that the proposed development would result in no unacceptable detrimental impact upon neighbouring occupiers and is therefore compliant with Policy D3 of the local plan and the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.13 The proposed development would be served by a minimum of two parking spaces that are off-street, therefore impacts to parking provision locally would not be harmful.

Environmental Implications:

- 4.3.14 The proposed development, by virtue of its limited scale in general terms together with the sustainable location would have no significant implications for the local environment in terms of carbon emissions and therefore would be generally in compliance with Section 14 of the NPPF.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposed development is considered acceptable and is considered to comply with the necessary provisions of the Local Plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework. Grant conditional permission.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None applicable.

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.

Signed  Sam Dicocco Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 29 August 2023	