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| <b>DELEGATED FILE NOTE</b> |
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**CASE OFFICER:** ...William Thompson.....

| APPLICATION<br>REFERENCE | BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF<br>DEVELOPMENT                                                                                                                                                         | APPLICATION SITE                                                                          |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 25/01480/FPH             | Insertion of ground floor bifold doors to existing southeast elevation of detached garage following removal of existing garage doors to facilitate garage conversion into ancillary annexe. | 4 New Cottage<br>Stagenhoe Park<br>St Pauls Walden<br>Hitchin<br>Hertfordshire<br>SG4 8DB |

**Submitted Plan Nos**

4NC:01 4NC:02 4NC:03

|        |                                         |
|--------|-----------------------------------------|
| D1     | Sustainable design                      |
| D2     | House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild |
| D3     | Protecting living conditions            |
| T2     | Parking                                 |
| SP5    | Countryside and Green Belt              |
| HS6    | Relatives and dependents accommodation  |
| SECN12 | Achieving well-designed places          |
| SECN13 | Protecting Green Belt Land              |
| SECN14 | Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding |

## 2.0 **Site History**

2.1 98/01560/1HH - Single storey rear extension.

**Conditional Permission**

- 2.2 95/00389/1HH - Replacement detached double garage with music/games roof in roofspace (as amended by drawing no 202:03A and 202:04 received 14<sup>th</sup> June 1995).

**Conditional Permission**

- 2.3 89/00358/1 - First floor rear extension and dormer window

**Conditional Permission**

3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 **Neighbour and site consultations** – One received in support.

- 3.2 **St Pauls Walden Parish Council** – None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The application site accommodates a terraced, two-storey dwelling situated on Stagenhoe Park, St Pauls Walden. The site benefits from a sizable plot and a surrounding garden. The application site lies within the Green Belt.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Insertion of ground floor bifold doors to existing southeast elevation of detached garage following removal of existing garage doors to facilitate garage conversion into ancillary annexe.

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.

Principle of Development:

Annexe

4.3.2 Policy HS6 of the Local Plan 2011-2031 sets out the requirements for introducing residential annexes. These criteria advise that permission will be granted provided:

*“a) a genuine need for the accommodation is demonstrated;*

*b) the annex is subordinate to the main dwelling and designed in such a way that it can be easily (re-)incorporated into the main house if use as an annex ceases;*

*c) any development would not exceed the size of extensions that would otherwise normally be acceptable; and*

*d) the occupation of the accommodation is restricted by condition.*

*Free standing annexes will be allowed where the above criteria are met and it can be demonstrated that adaptation or extension of the main house is not possible.”*

4.3.3 The applicant has advised that the annexe is needed and would be used for the accommodation of friends and family associated with the main household. I consider that this is suitable to meet a). The scale of the building would remain unchanged and is considered to be subordinate to the main dwelling by virtue of its size and position within the site and consider that it can be easily returned to its previous use. Matters of the acceptability of the scale of the building will be considered in the design section of this report. b) and c) are considered to be complied with subject to with, with the latter subject to its design being acceptable. Should permission be granted, d) would be complied with. Policy HS5 is therefore considered to be complied with.

#### Green Belt:

- 4.3.4 The site is within the Green Belt as allocated within the Local Plan. Paragraph 153 of the NPPF advises that significant weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt that arises from development unless Very Special Circumstances can be demonstrated to outweigh this harm. Paragraph 154 of the NPPF advises that the erection of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate development unless the development comprises one of the exceptions listed under this section. Exception c) advises *“the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;”*.
- 4.3.5 It is considered that the building conversion falls within the scope of exception c). The development does not result in the enlargement of the built form of the building and dwelling and, therefore, does not result in disproportionate additions over the original building. The development would not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 4.3.6 Paragraph 143 of the NPPF states the five purposes of the Green Belt. In my opinion, the development does not contradict with any of the five purposes. Given the above, the proposal is not inappropriate development in accordance with Section 13 of the NPPF and is therefore compliant with Policy SP5 of the Local Plan.

#### Design

- 4.3.7 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. Policy D2 of the Local Plan requires extensions to houses 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 sole external change would be the insertion of ground floor white framed bifold doors to existing southeast elevation of the existing detached garage following the removal of existing garage doors to facilitate the conversion of the existing garage into

an ancillary annexe. This change would be visible from the streetscene but would be minor.

- 4.3.9 In my view, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of the material palette and design and would, therefore, not cause harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling or streetscene. As such, the proposed development complies with Policy D1 and D2 of the NHLP and Section 12 of the NPPF.

#### Impact on Neighbours

- 4.3.10 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.
- 4.3.11 Regarding neighbour amenity, the proposal would not result in a change in built form or upper-floor windows. As such, it is not considered that the proposal would result in unacceptable harm upon neighbouring living conditions as to be objectionable in terms of over dominance, shading or overlooking.
- 4.3.12 This development is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy D3 of the NHLP and Section 12 of the NPPF.

#### Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.13 The proposal would result in an additional bedroom. There is no on-site parking, but parking is available to the south of the site. Therefore, the proposal would not comply with Policy T2 of the NHLP; however, the existing parking provision remains unaffected and the application site is in a sustainable location. This would not be a strong enough reason for refusal.

#### Environmental Implications

- 4.3.14 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:

4.3.15 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 **GRANTED**.

#### 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 **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 residential annexe hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwellinghouse known as 4 New Cottage.

Reason: To avoid the creation of a new dwelling contrary to the planning policies applicable to the area and to avoid the occupation of two separate dwellings by persons unconnected with each other as this would result in an unsatisfactory relationship and inadequate standard of amenity for both properties.

**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.

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| <p>Signed</p> <p></p> <p>Anne McDonald</p> <p>Determining Officer</p> | <p>Development Management<br/>North Hertfordshire District Council<br/>Council Offices<br/>Gernon Road<br/>Letchworth<br/>Herts<br/>SG6 3JF</p> |
| <p><b>Date:</b> 7 January 2026</p>                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                 |

