

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/00017/FP	External alterations to existing car parking area to provide additional garden space and erection of bin store.	Busy Bees Icknield Way Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 4GY

Submitted Plan Nos

9356/01B 9356/02B 9356/050C

1.0 Policies

D1	Sustainable design
D3	Protecting living conditions
HE1	Designated heritage assets

T1	Assessment of transport matters
T2	Parking
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN16	Conserve + enhance historic environment

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 None relevant.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Letchworth Heritage Foundation** – None received.

3.2 **Site Notice and Neighbour Consultation** – None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The site is Busy Bees Nursery, which is located along Icknield Way, just outside of the town centre boundary of Letchworth. The existing nursery operates at a capacity of 104 children and is serviced by 61 parking spaces for staff and parent/guardians. The site is surrounded by residential and community use, with the railway line running to the south of the site. The site is adjacent to, but not within, the Conservation Area.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 The application seeks planning permission for external alterations to the existing car parking area to provide additional garden space and erection of bin store.

4.2.2 The additional garden space will be accommodated through the removal of some on-site car parking, with provision decreasing from 60 to 51 spaces. The garden will be extended from the existing nursery garden to encompass the northeast corner of the site. This will extend the garden space by 206.9sq.m. The proposed works include the removal of the existing 6ft rear garden fence (approx. 13m) and installation of a replacement picket fence, together with new 6ft featheredge fencing across approximately 50m, including new double gates. The newly fitted featheredge fencing

and gates will be repositioned to create a dedicated bin store accessible from the car park.

4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key issues in this case are the principle of development, design, impact on neighbouring amenity, parking, and other matters.

Principle of Development

- 4.3.2 The proposal seeks to increase the size of the existing nursery garden by incorporating approx. 207sqm of the existing car park area, with new fencing/gates to enclose the space where appropriate and a new bin storage area. In principle, there is no objection to the proposed garden extension, as this seeks to improve the quality of the outdoor space for the children that attend the nursery. This will improve an existing facility, which would support health and wellbeing, directly supported by the NPPF.

Design

- 4.3.3 The proposal would be facilitated by the erection of 6ft fencing and gates, which already exist at the site, and this will merely be a case of re-orientating fencing to enclose the new space. Given the existing character of the site, there is no objection to the design and layout of this modest proposal. This would accord with Policy D1 of the Local Plan.
- 4.3.4 The site is adjacent to, but not within, the Letchworth Conservation Area. Given the nature of the proposal, it is not expected that the development will result in any material harm to the character of the Conservation Area, in accordance with Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

Neighbour Amenity

- 4.3.5 The site is located within relatively close proximity to a number of immediate neighbours. However, given the nature of the proposal and the extent of new built form, the proposal will not result in any adverse harm to the reasonable living conditions and well-being of neighbouring properties. This is in accordance with Policy D3 of the Local Plan.

Parking

- 4.3.6 This application is supported by a Transport Technical Note, which states that the site benefits from excellent accessibility by active and sustainable travel modes. The report identifies that staff and parents/guardians have opportunities to travel to the nursery on foot or by bicycle, with convenient access to local walking and cycling routes, including the Garden City Greenway. For those who live further afield, the site is well served by local bus routes and is located approximately 800 metres from Letchworth Garden City National Rail Station, providing sustainable travel options for part or all of the journey. The Technical Note additionally identifies that the nursery has a maximum operational capacity of 193 children and up to 70 staff, and that a 2000m walk catchment and 5000m cycle catchment cover the wider Letchworth area, Baldock, and parts of Hitchin, demonstrating extensive opportunities for non-car travel. The Technical Note also states, based on TRICS data and on-site observations, that the existing car park does not operate at or near full capacity during typical day-to-day operations, typically operating at

around 50% occupancy during peak periods. Accordingly, the proposed reduction in on-site parking provision from 60 to 51 spaces as a result of this proposal is deemed to be appropriate and consistent with Policy T1 and T2 Local Plan.

- 4.3.7 Having reviewed the submitted Transport Technical Note; it is agreed that the site is well served by various public transport modes and is within walking distance to nearby residential properties. It is also noted that the site currently operates at a 50% occupancy rate for parking during peak periods, such the removal of 11 spaces should not result in parking issues at the site. This is considered acceptable.

Other Matters

- 4.3.8 The proposal is exempt from the mandatory 10% BNG. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment identifies eight individual trees, one group and two hedgerows within influence of the site, all of which are retained without removal. Only minor deadwood removal from one tree (T8) is recommended for safety reasons, and existing hard surfacing provides adequate root protection during construction. Both assessments confirm that the development will not result in significant environmental or arboriculture impacts, which is acceptable.
- 4.3.9 The proposed bin storage area is considered acceptable, given its modest nature and location close to the existing bin store area.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposal is considered acceptable in planning terms against the relevant Local and National planning policies.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None.

4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 N/A.

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.

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 SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 27 February 2026	