

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Vicki Wood.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/01610/FPH	Replace existing raised lawn area to front elevation to form level car standing, to include installation of a brick wall and installation of railings and steps.	85 Beechwood Close Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 6LX

Submitted Plan Nos

CA-034192/5 CA-034192/1 CA-034192/2 CA-034192/3A CA-034192/4

1.0 Policies

1.0 **Local and National Policy**

1.1 **National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF)**

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Section 14 - Meeting the challenges of climate change, flooding and coastal change

1.2 **North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (NHLP)**

Strategic Policies

Policy SP1 – Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire

Policy SP2 – Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution

Policy SP9 – Design and Sustainability

Development Management Policies

Policy D1 – Sustainable design

Policy D3 – Protecting living conditions

Policy T1 – Assessment of transport matters

Policy T2 - Parking

1.3 **Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan 2021**

Policy G3 – Creating well-designed places

2.0 **Relevant Site History**

2.1 None.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Site and Neighbour Consultation** – One comment has been received from the neighbouring property to the north no.83 Beechwood Close offering support for the application. The comment includes concern around on-street parking pressures and the possible de-allocation of the on-street disabled parking bay following completion of the development. I have directed the occupant to HCC Highways.

3.2 **HCC Highways** – No objection subject to conditions.

3.3 **Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood** – None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The application site is located on the west side of Beechwood Close where the land level increases in a southerly direction. Access to the proposed off-street parking space would mean a reduction in the number of on-street parking spaces should the existing on-street disabled parking space remain.
- 4.1.2 No.91 Beechwood Close appears to have carried out a similar development in the absence of planning approval. Planning enforcement have been notified.
- 4.1.2 The application site is within the settlement boundary for Baldock where development is generally acceptable subject to policy requirements.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Replace existing raised lawn area to front elevation to form level car standing, to include installation of a brick wall and installation of railings and steps.

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.

Design and Appearance

- 4.3.2 The objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include those seeking to secure the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places (Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places). Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that *“Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”*. In this regard, Policy D1 and D2 of the Local Plan are consistent with the objectives set out within the NPPF.
- 4.3.3 The works would involve excavating a significant section of the existing raised grass bank which comprises the front garden of the property. The existing concrete pathway immediately alongside the front of the dwelling would remain, as would a short section of the grass bank between the concrete path and the proposed off-street parking space and the existing shared pedestrian access to the application site and the attached neighbour no.87 Beechwood Close. The parking space would have a depth of 5 metres and a width of 3 metres with a surface constructed of permeable paving blocks linking the parking space up to the public footpath. A retaining wall to a height of 1.5 metres

would be formed on two sides of the parking space with a stepped retaining wall ranging in height from approximately 0.6 metres to 1.6 metres to the east side with the neighbouring property known as No.83 Beechwood Close. Alongside the stepped retaining wall would be a newly formed set of steps with associated handrail providing additional pedestrian access to the property. Beyond the newly formed set of steps a small section of grass bank would be retained.

- 4.3.4 Separate confidential information has been provided as evidence in support of the application.
- 4.3.5 I am satisfied that the scale and design of the proposed off-street parking space would be acceptable and would not harm the visual amenity of the locality to any significant degree and would be in accordance with Policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties:

- 4.3.7 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 Local Plan.
- 4.3.8 The existing pedestrian access to both neighbouring properties nos.83 and 87 Beechwood Close would not be affected as a result of the proposed development and there would be no greater impact to existing residential amenity.
- 4.3.9 I am satisfied that the proposal is in accordance with Policy D3 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.10 The dwelling is currently served by on-street parking where there is a designated disabled parking bay. Should the disabled parking bay remain then the proposal would result in a change to the existing on-street parking provision to the detriment of other residents who do not benefit from off-street parking. Although I am mindful of the already significant off-street parking pressure in the area, no objection has been raised by the highway authority, and it is not clear if the designated disabled parking bay will remain or become a general parking space once the development is complete. Should the designated disabled parking bay become a general parking space, then the development would not impact on existing off-street parking provision.
- 4.3.11 On the basis of no objection having been received by the highway authority, I am satisfied that the proposed development would meet with the requirements of Policies T1 and T2 of the Local Plan and is acceptable.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 4.3.12 This is a householder application which is exempt from BNG legislation defined under article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Environmental Implications

- 4.3.12 Section 14 of the NPPF sets out how the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future. The principles set out in Section 14 are reflected in Policy D1 of the Local Plan, which sets out that development proposals should take all reasonable opportunities to reduce energy consumption and waste, retain existing vegetation and propose new appropriate planting, and future proof for changes in technology and lifestyle.
- 4.3.13 In my view, the proposed development would be unlikely to have any significant implications for the local environment in terms of carbon emissions and therefore would be generally in accordance with Policy D1 of the Local Plan and Section 14 of the NPPF.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposed development is considered acceptable and in accordance with Policies SP1, SP9, D1, D3, T1 and T2 of the Local Plan 2011-2031 and Sections 2, 12 and 14 of the NPPF 2024.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 N/A

4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 The agent has confirmed agreement to the highways authority's recommended Condition 2 as set out in the consultation response dated 11 July 2025.

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. No development shall commence until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, including elements of the CLOCS standards as set out in the Highway Authority's Construction Management template. The level of detail required in a Construction Management Plan will depend on the scale and nature of development. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan: The Construction Method Statement shall include details of:

Cleaning of site entrance and the adjacent public highway.

Reason: In order to protect highway safety and the amenity of other users of the public highway and rights of way in accordance with Policies 5, 12, 17 and 22 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

4. The gradient of the vehicular access shall not exceed 1:10 for the first 5 metres into the site as measured from the near channel edge of the adjacent carriageway. Arrangement shall be made for surface water drainage to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the highway carriageway.

Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory access and in the interests of highway safety and amenity in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

5. Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted the vehicular access shall be completed and thereafter retained as shown on drawing number (CA-034192/3) and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the highway authority. Prior to use appropriate arrangements shall be made for surface water to be intercepted and disposed of separately so that it does not discharge from or onto the highway carriageway.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory access into the site and avoid carriage of extraneous material or surface water from or onto the highway in accordance with Policy 5 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

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.

Informative/s:

1. 1. Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence.

Further information is available via the County Council website at:
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

2. Obstruction of highway: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence.

Further information is available via the County Council website at:
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/business-and-developer-information/business-licences/business-licences.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

3. New or amended vehicle crossover access (section 184): Where works are required within the public highway to facilitate a new or amended vehicular access, the Highway Authority require the construction of such works to be undertaken to their satisfaction and specification, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. If any of the works associated with the construction of the access affects or requires the removal and/or the relocation of any equipment, apparatus or structures (e.g. street name plates, bus stop signs or shelters, statutory authority equipment etc.) the applicant will be required to bear the cost of such removal or alteration. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission, requirements and for the work to be carried out on the applicant's behalf.

Further information is available via the County Council website at:
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/changes-to-your-road/dropped-kerbs/dropped-kerbs.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

Signed  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 13 August 2025	