

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Andrew Hunter.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/02794/FPH	First floor rear extension. Single storey front and side extensions including porch. Extension and alterations to existing conservatory. Insertion of rear box dormer and side rooflights to facilitate loft conversion. Alterations to fenestration	3 Highover Cottages Highover Way Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 0RQ

Submitted Plan Nos

6847 - D1 6847- D2(A) 6847 - D3 6847 - D4(A) 6847- D4(B) 6847 - D5

1.0 Policies

D1 Sustainable design

D2	House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild
D3	Protecting living conditions
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN9	Promoting sustainable transport
T2	Parking
SP9	Design and Sustainability
SP6	Sustainable transport

2.0 **Site History**

- 2.1 23/02839/FPH - First floor and single storey rear extensions, single storey side extension following demolition of existing conservatory. Insertion of front and rear dormer windows to facilitate conversion of loft into habitable accommodation – Refused 01/02/24 for:
1. The proposed development, by reason of its size, design, siting and appearance, will be detrimental to the character and appearance of the dwelling and the locality. The proposal does not comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan, and Section 12 of the NPPF.

3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 **Ecologist** – No comments to make.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The site is a detached two storey dwelling with a pitched roof. Side and rear party boundaries are comprised of 1.8m high fences. The site is in a residential area comprised of detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings. The site is also on the north edge of Hitchin, where land to the north is rural agricultural.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 A loft conversion with a rear dormer with a flat roof, a two-storey rear extension with a pitched roof the rear dormer would be attached to, and a single storey front side and rear extension with a flat roof. The number of bedrooms would be increased from four to six.

4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key material considerations are design, impacts on neighbour amenity, and parking. The North Hertfordshire Local Plan was adopted in November 2022 and full weight should be given to relevant policies. Local Plan Policy D1 addresses design, and requires, amongst other things, that development proposals respond positively to local context. Local Plan Policy D2 requires that house extensions are sympathetic to the existing house and do not dominate adjoining properties.

Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework addresses achieving well-designed places and paragraph 139 confirms that development that is not well-designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.

Design

- 4.3.2 The proposed single storey extension would not be of an excessive size in relation to the host dwelling, and would in part replace a rear conservatory. The flat roof and detailed design would be compatible with the character and appearance of the dwelling and the extension would appear subservient to the host dwelling. The extension would not be much larger than an extension proposed under 23/02839/FPH.
- 4.3.3 The single storey extension would project beyond the front elevation of the dwelling, but is not considered. The symmetrical and attractive appearance of the front elevation would be adversely affected. However, the effect upon the character and appearance of the area would be limited due to its low height, distance from the NE side wall of the dwelling and limited public visibility. The application property is one of three dwellings of a similar design. The visual impact upon the group would not be significant as it would be at the far end with less visibility and would be of a low height. On the whole whilst there would be harm to the appearance of the host dwelling the effect upon the character and appearance of the area would not be significant.
- 4.3.4 The enlargements and alterations to the roof of the dwelling, including the two-storey rear extension, will be the most visible and significant part of the development. Previous application 23/02839/FPH was refused partly on the basis of three front dormers being proposed, however no front dormers are proposed here, which overcomes that concern.
- 4.3.5 The two-storey rear extension and rear dormer are of a similar size and design to that proposed under previous application 23/02839/FPH. The officer report stated in respect of those elements:

"The two storey rear extension will be above an existing single storey rear projection. There are no objections to a first floor extension above this in isolation. The combined second floor dormer and pitched roof with gable window would however be considered to visually dominate the rear roof slope of the dwelling, and would be harmful to its

character and appearance. There would also be harm to the character and appearance of the locality from these rear additions as they would be visible from the track leading to Highover Farm and the rear of the group of three dwellings the site is within."

- 4.3.6 This remains the case for the current proposal, therefore the size and design of the two-storey rear extension and dormer are not acceptable. The proposal does not comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan, and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Neighbour amenity

- 4.3.7 The proposed single storey extension will not harm the amenity of closest neighbouring dwelling No. 2 as it will be obscured by the host dwelling and sited away from the boundary. It is not considered that this extension will harm the amenity of dwellings to the SW as the extension will be single storey with a flat roof, and largely obscured by fences and vegetation.
- 4.3.8 The two-storey rear extension and rear dormer are of a similar size and design to that of previous application 23/02839/FPH, which were not considered harmful to neighbour amenity.
- 4.3.9 This application proposes rooflights on each side of the roof of the two-storey rear extension, which weren't previously proposed by the 2023 application. Both these rooflights are high within the respective roof slopes and would primarily provide views of the sky and/or oblique views of the closest dwellings. It is considered that they would lead to harm levels of overlooking and loss of privacy for occupiers of neighbouring dwelling houses. It is considered that the proposal complies with Policy D3 of the Local Plan.

Parking

- 4.3.10 The number of bedrooms will be increased from four to six, however this does not require additional parking provision under LPA standards. The rear of the site will retain parking for two cars, which complies with minimum Council standards and is acceptable. The proposal complies with Policy T2 of the Local Plan.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 In the absence of material planning reasons to the contrary it is my view that planning permission is **REFUSED**.

5.0 **Recommendation**

- 5.1 That planning permission be **REFUSED** for the following reason:

1. The proposed development, by reason of its size, design, siting and appearance, will be detrimental to the character and appearance of the dwelling and the locality. Therefore the proposal does not comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan, and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been refused for this proposal for the clear reasons set out in this decision notice. The Council has not acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant as in the Council's view the proposal is unacceptable in principle and the fundamental objections cannot be overcome through dialogue. Since no solutions can be found the Council has complied with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Signed  Shaun Greaves Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 4 February 2025	