DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Heather Lai.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
18/01396/FPH	First floor rear extension, side dormer window extension. Alterations to ground floor including new bi-folding doors to rear elevation and new windows.	6 Harkness Way Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 0QH

Submitted Plan Nos

1809-001; 1809-002

1.0 Policies

LP28	House Extensions

LP55	Car Parking Standards
XD1	Sustainable Design
XD2	Hse Extns,Replacement Dwells,Outbuilding
XD3	Protecting Living Conditions
XT2	Parking

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 7 – Requiring good design

Supplementary Planning Document

Vehicle Parking at New Development September 2011

2.0 **Site History**

90/00688/1: Single storey rear extension, detached single garage and loft conversion incorporating dormer window. Approved.

3.0 **Representations**

Local residents

No representations received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

The application site is an inter-war semi-detached single storey dwelling that has previously had loft extensions to increase the floorspace. It is unlisted and located outside a conservation area. The site is located off the Cambridge Road on the edge of Hitchin.

4.2 **Proposal**

First floor rear extension, side dormer window extension. Alterations to ground floor including new bi-folding doors to rear elevation and new windows.

4.3 **Key Issues**

Design:

The existing dwelling is an inter-war single storey semi-detached, with a large bay window to the front elevation. It is typical of other semi-detached dwellings on this side of Harkness Way, which is a reflection of the inter-war development of the area. It has been previously extended to create loft level accommodation and has a front dormer, as does the adjoining property.

The proposal seeks to erect a large side dormer to the roof, to enable additional extensions to the existing loft extension. To facilitate this, the ridge line of the roof would be extended to the rear of the existing building line, resulting in a flat, two storey rear elevation to the host building, which was originally designed as a single storey dwelling.

The dwelling has historically been extended (see site history above) and extends beyond the adjoining property (no. 4) to the rear. It has an existing pitched dormer roof extension to the rear, with a rooflight to the side of this dormer. There is also an existing box dormer roof extension to the front roofslope, with a pitched roof. Adjoining no. 4 also has a front dormer which is marginally smaller than the one to the application site, but they are alike in scale, design and relationship to the host buildings, and allow the dwellings to be read as a pair. To the rear, while the pitched dormer to no.6 is more prominent than that at no. 4 (and is positioned further back owing to the extension), given the limited visibility on this rear roofslope, and that the dormers remain subservient to the host buildings, they relate to each other in terms of their detailed design that the existing situation is acceptable.

Policy 28 states that house extensions are normally only acceptable providing they are *"...sympathetic to the existing house in height, form, proportions, window details and materials..."* and *"...pitched roofs are used where appropriate..."*
It goes on to state *rear extensions should not dominate the adjoining property and should be well related to the levels of adjoining properties…*
This wording is reflected in Policy D2 of the Emerging Local Plan, and it is considered the proposed large side dormer roof extension and associated creation of a first floor rear extension do not accord with Policy 28 or Policy D2.
It is considered the proposed extension would not enhance the design of the dwelling or indeed the pair; the extensions would not be subservient, or sympathetic in terms of height, scale, form or detailed design. The large side dormer would be read as an overly dominant, discordant feature at roof level, and would result in a two storey dwelling to the rear of the property which is a single storey semi-detached dwelling. The existing pitched roof to the side and rear of the dwelling would be lost, and the extensions would dominate the adjoining property, resulting in a discordant reading of the semi-detached pair.

In addition, the proposed materiality of the dormer would not be in keeping with the host building, which would add to the prominence of the large roof level extension. The dormer is proposed to extend to the eaves at the rear of the dwelling, and terminate just below the ridge of the principal roofline. As such, it would result in over half of the side pitch roof being subsumed by the dormer, which would have a flat roof with a roof light. The dormer would be visible from both private and public views and would appear dominant when viewing the property from the street.

It is considered the proposed works are contrary to Policy 28 and Policy D2 and are unacceptable in design terms. Alterations which would facilitate the creation of a first floor extension (as opposed to roof level loft extensions) are unacceptable in principle in this location given the harm to the semi detached pair and the wider street scene. While there may be scope for additional roof level alterations at the site, it is considered the scale would have to be significantly reduced, and would result in a materially different scheme and therefore amendments have not been sought on this occasion.

Amenity:

Adjoining no. 4 is located to the south east of the application site. Owing to existing extensions, no. 6 projects further to the rear than no. 4, but the current proposal does not include additional depth to the rear at ground floor level. At first floor level the rear is to be built up to provide first floor accommodation and to facilitate the erection of the side dormer. While there would be additional building up at first floor level, it is considered this would not result in a material loss of light to no. 4 owing to the windows being set in from the boundary, and also given the existing extensions at no. 6 at ground floor and loft level.
While it would result in significant bulk which would be visible from the rear of no. 4, given the length of the back gardens and the relationship between the two properties it is considered that the works would not cause a material sense of enclosure that would result in an unacceptable loss of amenity. There are no windows proposed that would face towards no. 4 and therefore would not result in a loss of privacy.

No. 8, to the north west is adjacent the site and would face the proposed dormer extension from the side. While there would be a loss of privacy resulting from the upper floor windows at the application site, it is considered this would not result in a materially unacceptable situation, given the angle on which the would view the ground floor side windows to no. 8, and that two of the windows are obscure glazed, with only the semi glazed door being clear glazed. In addition the proposed plans show that one of the dormer windows is to serve a bathroom and would be fitted with obscure glazing. The other window would serve a master bedroom, which would also have significant glazing to the rear, and if planning permission were to be granted, a condition requiring the second dormer window to be partially obscured would have been imposed to protect the amenity of occupants of no. 8.

While no. 8 is located to the north west of the application site, owing to the fact that a significant part of the extensions would be within the demise of the existing roof slope, and the set back between the two properties it is considered there would not be a material loss of light resulting from the roof level extensions. It is considered the proposal would result in an increased sense of enclosure, however given this side elevation is already compromised owing to the relationship between the two dwellings, and given the windows serving this side of the dwelling are obscured, it cannot be argued that any sense of enclosure would result in a material worsening of the existing situation. The proposal would result in a less than ideal, but not unneighbourly arrangement and therefore no amenity reason for refusal is to be added to the decision notice.

To the rear, the site backs onto the large rear garden of no. 241 Cambridge Road. The dwelling at no. 241 is located at a distance from the application site and to the south and therefore the proposal would not result in a material amenity impact.

Car Parking Standards:
The proposed development would not trigger the requirement for additional car parking to be provided within the application site.

4.4 **Conclusion**

5.0 **Recommendation**

5.1 That planning permission be **REFUSED** for the following reasons:

1. The side dormer window / first floor rear extension, due to its size, form, height and materiality would appear as an unacceptable addition to the house. This is exacerbated by the loss of much of the roof slope to the side roof pitch which would be visible from the street and would be viewed as an overly dominant, incongruous addition. It is considered to be harmful to the character of the street scene. The application is therefore considered to fail to comply with the provisions of Saved Policy 28 of the North Herts District Local Plan 1996 and Policy D2 of the emerging Local Plan, in accordance with the spirit of the policy in paragraph 64 of the NPPF, and is being recommended for refusal on poor design grounds.

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 alterations required to make the proposal acceptable are to the extent that the outcome would be a materially different planning application, 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 (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Signed  Simon Ellis Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 9 July 2018	