

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...William Thompson.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/02958/FPH	Existing roof altered from hip to gable roof extension including rear dormer with glass balcony balustrade to facilitate loft conversion to habitable space. Single storey side extension. Removal of chimneys.	3 Westfield Lane Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 2HE

Submitted Plan Nos

25121 - 001 25121 - 002 25121 - 010 A 25121 - 011 A

1.0 Policies

D1	Sustainable design
D2	House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild

D3	Protecting living conditions
T2	Parking
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN14	Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 None relevant

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Neighbour Consultation** – One received in objection:

- Concerns about works to garden fence.
- Concerns about size of glazing to rear dormer affecting privacy.
- Concerns about disruption during construction.

Ward Cllr – None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The application site accommodates a detached, two-storey dwelling situated on Westfield Lane, Hitchin. The site benefits from a garage, driveway a front garden and a long, thin rear garden.

4.1.2 The application dwelling has been previously extended; however, this appears to have been completed under permitted development.

4.1.3 The application dwelling lies in a row of 4no. very similarly designed dwellings. While each of these dwellings have differing rear elements, the front elevations, bar the colour and level of render to no.1 and the attached garage forms, have very little deviation, especially considering the roof forms and matching south side elevation chimneys.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Existing roof altered from hip to gable roof extension including rear dormer with glass balcony balustrade to facilitate loft conversion to habitable space. Single storey side extension. Removal of chimneys.

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.

Design

4.3.2 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.

4.3.3 The proposed single storey side/rear extension would have a depth of 5.077m to match the depth of the existing rear most wall, a width of 2.727m to match the width of the existing side most wall and a flat roof with a height of 2.75m to match the height of the existing single storey elements. The design includes 1no. rooflight. The proposed external materials are set to match existing.

- 4.3.4 The proposed hip to gable roof extension would see an increase in height of 2.95m to the side elevation roof forms but would not increase the maximum ridge height. The proposal seeks to remove the 2no. side elevation chimneys. The proposed rear box dormer would have a width of 5.77m, a maximum depth of 3.3m and a flat roof with a maximum height of 2.57m. The design of the rear box dormer includes full height and full width glazed sliding doors and a glass balustrade. The proposed external materials for the roof extension are set to match existing. The proposed external materials for the rear box dormer are metal cladding for the walls and roof and aluminium crittal style framing for the doors.
- 4.3.5 In my view, the scale of the proposed single storey side/rear extension would act as infill to the existing single storey elements and would be considered as a sympathetic addition to the dwelling and not disproportionate. As the proposed external materials are set to match the existing dwelling bar the metal clad rear dormer, which would be to the rear and not visible to the public realm, the materials are considered sympathetic to the dwelling and wider street scene. However, the proposed altered roof form and removal of the chimneys would deviate considerably from what is otherwise a very uniform set of detached dwellings. Additionally, the full width and full height glazing to the rear box dormer, while to the rear, would deviate from the existing upper floor window form; this design, combined with the existing rear elevation ground floor glazing would result in heavy glazing to the rear, visible to neighbouring properties. Therefore, the proposed design would fail to comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the NHLP and Paragraph 139 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbours

- 4.3.6 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.
- 4.3.7 Regarding neighbour amenity, namely no.1 and no.5 Westfield Lane, the proposed roof alteration and single storey rear/side extension are unlikely to cause unacceptable harm. However, while the level of harm to loss of privacy from the proposed rear dormer may be debated, the level of glazing at 2nd floor level would considerably increase the sense of overlooking to the neighbouring properties. This is evidenced by comments from no.1 objecting to the level of glazing. Therefore, while there would not be unacceptable harm in terms of overdominance or shading, an unacceptable level of harm would arise in terms of a sense of overlooking and resulting loss of privacy.
- 4.3.8 This development is therefore not considered to be in accordance with Policy D3 of the NHLP and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.9 The proposal does includes an increase in the number of bedrooms from 3no. to 4no.; however, the on-site parking provision remains unaffected and provides 2no. parking spaces. The application site resides in a sustainable location. Therefore, with regard to Policy T2 of the NHLP, there would be no car parking issues arising from the development.

Environmental Implications

- 4.3.10 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:

- 4.3.11 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 **REFUSED**.

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 **REFUSED** for the following reasons:

1. The proposed roof alteration and rear box dormer by reason of its design would not be sympathetic to the dwelling and locality, causing harm to their character and appearance. Therefore, the proposal does not comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the adopted North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 and Paragraph 139 of Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The proposed rear box dormer with balustrade would result in harmful sense of over looking and resulting loss of privacy and harm to the amenity of Nos. 1 and 5 Westfield Lane. Therefore, the proposal does not comply with Policy D3 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

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: 13 February 2026	