

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/01623/FPH	Single storey front and side extensions including balcony area with glass balustrade above following demolition of existing conservatory. Insertion of front first floor window, side box dormer and rooflights to create habitable space at first floor level.	3 Alpine Close Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9DZ

Submitted Plan Nos

PL01 PL02 PL03 PL04 PL05 PL06 PL07 PL08 PL09 PL10 PL11 PL12 PL13 PL14 PL15

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
SP6	Sustainable transport
T2	Parking
SP9	Design and Sustainability

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 91/00474/1 - Two storey rear extension – Approved 20/06/91.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The site is a detached bungalow with a pitched roof. Ground levels fall towards the rear. Rear party boundaries are walls, fences and vegetation a minimum of 1.8m high. The site is in a residential cul-de-sac of similar detached bungalows and chalet bungalows.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 The proposal is for a single storey side extension with a flat roof to replace an existing conservatory, a single storey front extension with a flat roof, a new higher flat roof to an attached garage projection, a side dormer with a flat roof to facilitate a loft conversion, a balcony with a balustrade over the flat roof of the ground floor, four new rooflights, and altered and new front elevation windows. The number of bedrooms will be increased from two to four.

4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key material considerations are design, impacts on neighbour amenity, and parking.

Design

- 4.3.2 There are no objections to the new and altered front windows as they would have small and acceptable impacts. The front extension would be small, a similar depth to the front of a single storey side projection, and will not harm the character and appearance of the dwelling and the street scene.
- 4.3.3 The side extension will be slightly larger than the conservatory it would replace in footprint and height, and will remain in keeping with the character and appearance of the dwelling and the locality. The new roof to the attached garage will be not be significantly higher than the existing and it will continue to appear as a single storey projection, and is acceptable. The new rooflights would be small individually and cumulatively and are acceptable.
- 4.3.4 The new dormer would be large, and would cover much of the NE side roof slope it would be built on. The dormer would be close to the ridge and sides of the roof, leaving little of the present roof slope remaining. The dormer is considered excessively large for the roof slope it would be built on, and is considered harmful to the character and appearance of the dwelling.
- 4.3.5 The dormer would also be clearly visible in the street scene. Nos. 1, 2 and 5 Alpine Close have dormers, therefore a dormer in principle is considered acceptable in the street scene. The dormers at Nos. 1, 2 and 5 are however much smaller than the dormer proposed at No. 3, which is considered to be visually harmful to the character and appearance of the street scene due to its size, design and visibility.
- 4.3.6 The new balcony is the other element of the proposal, which the proposed dormer would lead directly out on. Other dwellings in Alpine Close do not have balconies visible in the street scene, and their planning histories do not include balconies.
- 4.3.7 The proposed balcony would be relatively large in footprint compared to that of the main dwelling, although it would be most evident from its balustrade. This balustrade would be glass and of a low height, and is not considered harmful to the character and appearance of the dwelling.

- 4.3.8 The balcony would be the first balcony in the street scene of Alpine Close. While as above it's not considered harmful to the host dwelling, it's considered that due to its size, design and visibility it would be harmful to the character and appearance of the street scene, moreso as it would be the first balcony and it would be clearly visible in the street scene. Occupants of the host dwelling would also be able to stand and sit out on the balcony, which could also have lighting installed, which would result in further adverse impacts on the street scene. The design is not considered acceptable. The proposal does not comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the adopted Local Plan, and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Neighbour amenity

- 4.3.9 The altered front window would have similar impacts to the existing and will not be harmful. The new first floor front window would provide views primarily of the front of the site and the public highway, and will not be harmful.
- 4.3.10 The 3 highest rooflights would be at a high level for the rooms they would serve, and would not cause loss of privacy and amenity. The other rooflight would be at a lower level and could cause loss of privacy to the rear garden of No. 4 Alpine Close, however if permission was to be granted that rooflight could be required to be obscure glazed by condition as the room it serves would also have a rear window.
- 4.3.11 The front extension would be a small size and set away from neighbouring dwellings, and will not cause loss of amenity. The single storey side extension will have similar impacts to the conservatory it will replace, and will not be harmful. The new roof to the garage will not be much higher than the existing, set away from the closest neighbours, and will not harm amenity.
- 4.3.12 The dormer and balcony would not be considered to cause overbearing impacts and loss of light to the nearest dwellings as these would not be large additions in this respect. The main impacts from these parts of the proposed development concern potential loss of privacy and amenity.
- 4.3.13 Assessing whether there would be harmful loss of privacy, impacts would arise from a combination of the openings on the dormer and how they would open out onto the proposed balcony, and from occupants of the dwelling standing and sitting out on the balcony itself. Due to the siting of the balcony and dormer, their main impacts would be No. 2 Alpine Close, and on the rear gardens of dwellings to the east.
- 4.3.14 Starting with the rear gardens of the dwellings to the east, views from the dormer would be mainly of the roof of an outbuilding at the end of the rear garden of No. 193 Stevenage Road, and would not cause harmful loss of privacy. The balcony would provide more views of the gardens to the east, however views would also be obscured by vegetation and outbuildings, and are not considered overly harmful.
- 4.3.15 No. 2 Alpine Close is NE of the site. The party boundary with No. 2 is a 1.8m high wall and fence, which also lowers relative to the height and level of the balcony as ground levels fall towards east of the site.

- 4.3.16 The NE edge of the balcony would be approx. 7m from the boundary and rear garden of No. 2 and approx. 10m from the SE side elevation of No. 2, with the NE elevation of the dormer being slightly further away.
- 4.3.17 The above distances are considered short, and would allow occupants of No. 3 clear views into the rear garden of No. 2 and similarly clear views of the SE side elevation of No. 2, from the balcony and to a lesser extent from the dormer. The balcony is considered the most harmful as the dormer would be a minimum of 9m from the boundary with No. 2. The combination of the balcony and dormer are considered in this case harmful to the privacy and amenity of No. 2 Alpine Close. The proposal does not comply with Policy D3 of the adopted Local Plan.

Parking

- 4.3.18 The number of bedrooms will be increased from two to four. The dwelling has a single garage and a driveway, however neither are of a sufficient length and size to park a car, therefore the site does not have any parking provision.
- 4.3.19 The driveway is approx. 4m in length and is accessed off one end of a turning head at the end of Alpine Close. Occupants of No. 3 park on their driveway and overhang slightly onto the public highway Alpine Close without significantly obstructing it or neighbouring dwellings, therefore effectively the site has one parking space.
- 4.3.20 There is presently therefore a parking provision deficit of one space, as minimum parking requirements in the Local Plan for dwellings with two or more bedrooms are two parking spaces. This would remain the case with the current proposal. The increase in the number of bedrooms would be considered to increase parking demands from the application property, although local impacts are not considered significantly harmful. The proposal is not considered objectionable regarding parking. The proposal complies with Policy T2 of the adopted 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 reasons:

1. The proposed dormer and balcony by reason of its size, design and siting would not be in keeping with the host dwelling and would be detrimental to its character and appearance and that of the street scene. The proposal does not comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the adopted Local Plan, and Section 12 of the NPPF.
2. The proposed dormer and balcony would be considered to result in harmful loss of privacy and amenity to No. 2 Alpine Close. The proposal does not comply with Policy D3 of the Local Plan.

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  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 5 August 2025	