

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/01388/FPH	Extensions and alterations including raised roof height of existing detached garage to create one-bed ancillary annexe	Oakdene Stevenage Road Little Wymondley Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 7HY

Submitted Plan Nos

ME-2512-PL001 ME-2512-PL201 ME-2512-PL210 ME-2512-PL110 ME-2512-PL215

SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN14	Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding
HS6	Relatives and dependents accommodation
T2	Parking
D1	Sustainable design
D3	Protecting living conditions
SECN16	Conserve + enhance historic environment
HE1	Designated heritage assets
HE4	Archaeology

2.0 **Relevant Site History**

2.1 **04/01074/1HH - Two storey side extension**

Conditional Permission

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Neighbour Consultation** – 1no. received in objection: The Cherry Tree. Comments summarised below:

- Noise disturbance;
- Use of the annexe as a separate dwelling;
- Overbearing;
- Inappropriate development in Flood Zones 2 and 3;
- Harm to neighbouring Listed Buildings;
- Concerns over policy compliance (HS6).

3.2 **HCC Archaeology** – No comments.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The application site accommodates a detached, two-storey dwelling situated on Stevenage Road, Little Wymondley. The site is located within the Little Wymondley Archaeological Area and is located within the setting of the Plume of Feathers Public House, which is a Grade II Listed Building.

4.1.2 The application dwelling is set back from the highway and benefits from a generous plot with a driveway. The existing garage building, to which extensions and change of use to an annexe is proposed, is sited forward of the main dwelling and to the east of the front curtilage. The east part of the front curtilage is obscured from the street view by mature boundary hedging.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Extensions and alterations including raised roof height of existing detached garage to create one-bed ancillary annexe.

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are as follows:

- Principle of development;
- Design and appearance;

- Impact on the historic environment;
- Impact on neighbouring properties;
- Highways and parking matters;
- Environmental Impacts and Flood Risk;
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

Principle of Development

4.3.2 Policy HS6 of the Local Plan 2011-2031 sets out the requirements for introducing residential annexes:

a) a genuine need for the accommodation is demonstrated

The accompanying Planning Statement, dated May 2026, provides the following justification for the annexe:

The proposed annexe is intended to provide accommodation for my son and his husband, who were recently married. The aim is to allow them to remain within the family home while having their own independent living space, which cannot be achieved within the current footprint of the main house.

Both occupants are employed as paramedics with the East of England Ambulance Service. The proposed accommodation would enable them to live close to their operational base, supporting their ability to respond efficiently and contributing positively to the local community.

The development also seeks to address current housing affordability challenges. By providing accommodation within the family property, it will allow them to reduce living costs and save towards a future deposit for their own home.

The design has been carefully considered to minimise impact on neighbouring properties. The proposal involves only a modest extension to the existing garage footprint and will utilise materials that are sympathetic to, and in keeping with, the existing dwelling and surrounding area.

The annexe will remain ancillary to the main dwelling and will not form a separate, independent unit of accommodation

While reasoning for 'need' has been provided, a 'genuine need' in the context of Policy HS6 should demonstrate a functional link between the main house and the annexe. The reasoning provided by the DAS relates to the applicant's desire to stay in their present location, while being independent of the main house. Therefore, I do not consider that a functional link between the main house and annexe has been evidenced. The proposal does not accord with criterion 'a' of Policy HS6.

b) the annex is subordinate to the main dwelling and designed in such a way that it can be easily (re-)incorporated into the main house if use as an annex ceases, and

c) any development would not exceed the size of extensions that would otherwise normally be acceptable.

The proposed alterations to the existing outbuilding, as discussed in more detail under in the following sections. While the increased volume of the development would not exceed size of extensions that would otherwise normally be acceptable, the development as a whole, given the siting away from the dwelling in the frontage, separate parking and separate private amenity space, gives the impression of a separate planning unit with a tenuous link to the existing dwellinghouse.

d) the occupation of the accommodation is restricted by condition.

On account of the concerns raised above, I do not believe that use as an annexe could be conditioned or secured by legal agreement.

For freestanding annexes, there is an additional requirement that “it can be demonstrated that adaptation or extension of the main house is not possible.” The submitted Planning Statement states that alterations to the existing dwellinghouse would not be feasible; these arguments centre around the difficulty of internal alterations which would seek to split the property, a reluctance towards rear extensions, the fact that a new front entrance door would appear unsightly and that a new rear entrance would result in occupants crossing the existing rear amenity space. I am unconvinced by these arguments given that an annexe centres around providing accommodation and does not require a property to be fully split whereby occupants must avoid interaction. The two-storey side extension permitted in 2004 under reference number 04/01074/1HH introduced a bedroom with an adjoining WC/shower and allowed for the master bedroom on the first floor to introduce an en-suite and dressing room. The current dwelling has 4 no. bedrooms, 2no. of which have adjoining WC/shower and 2no. further WC/bathrooms. Therefore, given historical enlargement of the dwelling to increase habitable accommodation and the current size and level of amenity, I am unconvinced that the adaptation or extension of the main house is not possible.

Given the above reasoning, I do not consider that the proposal complies with Policy HS6 of the NHLP.

Design and Appearance:

4.3.3 Policy D1 of the Local Plan requires that development proposals respond positively to the site’s local context. Policy D2 of the Local Plan requires extensions to houses and outbuildings to incorporate a 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.

- 4.3.4 The proposed annexe would replace the existing front garage. The annexe would have a slightly enlarged footprint and first-floor element. However, the increase in scale would not obscure the principal elevation of the main dwelling by an unacceptable degree. Despite its siting to the front, design choices such as a dual-pitched roof and materials to match the host dwelling would ensure that the annexe is read in the same visual context as the main house. While there is an element of subdivision of the plot, the parking spaces are maintained from existing and the green space is maintained; The ridge increase is limited to 0.5m and the width would not appear incongruous to other front outbuildings along the streetscene.
- 4.3.5 In my view, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in design terms and would, therefore, not cause harm to the character and appearance of the site or streetscene. The proposal is considered to comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the NHLP and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Impact on the Historic Environment

- 4.3.6 Policy HE1 emphasises how permission will be refused where proposals would cause substantial harm or a loss of significance to a Heritage Asset, while Policy SP13 emphasises how great weight will be given to the potential harms to the significance of heritage assets, including management of their setting. These policies comply with the LPA's statutory duty under s.66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Furthermore, Policy HE4 outlines the importance of protecting areas of archaeological interest. Policies SP13, HE1 and HE4 are supported in principle by Policy NHE9 of the Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan (WNP). These policies are broadly commensurate with Section 16 of the NPPF.
- 4.3.7 The site is located within the Little Wymondley Archaeological Area. The HCC Archaeology Officer has raised no objection to the proposal on archaeological grounds.
- 4.3.8 The site is located within the setting of the Plume of Feathers Public House, which is a Grade II Listed Building. The neighbour objection raised concerns over the impact of the proposal upon this heritage asset. While the proposed annexe would constitute some increase in built form above the existing front garage structure, the annexe would remain in the same siting, and the choice of materials/overall design approach means that the annexe would appear sympathetic to the main dwelling. As a result, this would ensure that the existing character of the street remains intact, and the proposal would not have an adverse impact upon the special interest of the Plume of Feathers public house.

- 4.3.9 Therefore, the proposal meets the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policies SP13, HE1 and HE4 of the NHLP, and Section 16 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties:

- 4.3.10 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.
- 4.3.11 The neighbour objection raised concerns that the provision of an annexe would generate unacceptable noise disturbance, as well as the annexe being used as a separate dwelling. The provision of annexe accommodation at this scale is not considered to amount to an unacceptable increase in noise generation.
- 4.3.12 The neighbour objection also highlighted concerns that the annexe would appear overbearing to their property. As discussed in 'design and appearance', the annexe is considered to be of an acceptable scale for its siting forward of the principal elevation. The siting of the annexe, which is largely commensurate with the siting of the existing outbuilding, would be sited along the east boundary which borders the Plume of Feathers. As such, the annexe would be reasonably distanced from The Cherry Trees to the west. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not cause such harm to neighbour amenity, as to be objectionable, in terms of over-dominance or shading.
- 4.3.13 The proposal would include 2no. roof lights to serve the first-floor. Due to the siting of the annexe within the front curtilage of the site, which is parallel with the front curtilage of neighbouring properties, and is screened by vegetation, the proposal would not cause such harm to neighbour amenity, as to be objectionable, in terms of loss of privacy.
- 4.3.14 This development is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy D3 of the NHLP and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.15 The neighbour objection highlighted concerns over adequate on-site parking provision. As demonstrated on the submitted block plan, the application site benefits from a front parking area, and an additional 2no. parking spaces proposed to the south of the annexe. Therefore, with regard to Policy T2 of the NHLP and Policy HOD3 of the WNP, no parking issues should arise from the proposal.

Environmental Implications and Flood Risk:

- 4.3.16 The proposed development is not large enough in scale to cause significant implications for the local environment in terms of carbon emissions and therefore would be generally in compliance with Section 14 of the NPPF.
- 4.3.17 The neighbour objection questioned the appropriateness of the development within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The overall site is located within Flood Zones 2 and 3 of the Environment Agency's Flood Maps, with the proposed annexe being sited within Flood Zone 2. Section 14 of the NPPF requires new development in flood risk zones to incorporate adequate mitigation measures, which is reiterated by Policy FR1 of the WNP. The submitted plans demonstrate that flood mitigation measures, such as raising floor levels, will be incorporated where practicable.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):

- 4.3.14 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 development is not considered acceptable as an annexe as no genuine need has been demonstrated or that the adaptation or extension of the main dwelling is not possible. As a result, the proposal does not comply with Policy HS6 of the North Herts 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  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 11 August 2026	