

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Thomas Howe.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/00398/FP	Part change of use and conversion of ground floor to bakery shop, retail unit and an ancillary office. Insertion of two ground floor rear windows. (Amended plan received 03/03/26 and 07/05/26).	The George At Baldock Hitchin Street Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 6AE

Submitted Plan Nos

PL01 PL02 305-TG 500 A TG

1.0 Policies

2.0 **Site History**

- 2.1 24/00182/LBC - Part change of use and conversion of ground floor restaurant to four hotel rooms (C1 use) and one retail (E(a) use) and bar unit, to include insertion of two windows to rear elevation and internal alterations. – Conditional Consent
- 2.2 24/00181/FP - Part change of use and conversion of ground floor restaurant to four hotel rooms (C1 use) and one retail (E(a) use) and bar unit, to include insertion of two windows to rear elevation and internal alterations. – Conditional Permission
- 2.3 26/00399/LBC - Insertion of two ground floor rear windows and internal alterations to facilitate part change of use and conversion of ground floor bakery shop, retail unit and an ancillary office. - Pending
- 2.4 Various other applications.

3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 **Neighbour Consultation** – None Received.
- 3.2 **Conservation Officer** - No Objection. Received information of joinery and materials and considers them to be acceptable.
- 3.5 **Environmental Health** -

Noise: Initially sought details of noise, specifically the use of rooms above the proposed bakery. Seeks conditions to limit hours of operation of kitchen to after 7am to mitigate conflict. No objection otherwise.
- 3.6 **Highways** – Does not wish to restrict grant of permission.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The application site comprises The George at Baldock. A unit most recently in use as a public house hotel space. The list entry for The George reads as follows:

***“Early C19 front of red brick with slightly projecting 5 storey centre, 2 storey wings. Hipped tiled roof. 1:3:1 sash windows with glazing bars in reveals under flat arches, ground floor arched panels to 3 central windows, Dummy window in centre of each floor. Roof parapets, brick modillion cornice above 2nd floor. Modern wing on left.*”**

Nos 2 to 16 (even) form a group.”

4.2 Proposal

- 4.2.1 Part change of use and conversion of ground floor to bakery shop, retail unit and an ancillary office. Insertion of two ground floor rear windows.

4.3 Key Issues

- 4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are as follows:

- The principle of the development.
- The acceptability of the design of the proposed development and its resultant impact on the character and appearance of the area.
- The standard of amenity afforded to future occupiers.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on the living conditions of neighbouring properties.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on car parking provision in the area.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on the environment.

Principle of Development:

- 4.3.2 The application site is within Baldock, wherein general development is permitted by Policy SP2. Given the site's location within Secondary Shopping Frontage, Policy ETC5 is triggered. This policy permits ground floor uses for shops, financial and professional services, restaurants and cafes, pubs or drinking establishments and takeaways. Given the proposed uses are for a bakery, providing eat in and takeaway options, and for retail, I consider that the provisions of this policy would be met.

Sustainability:

- 4.3.3 The three pillars of sustainable development are the economic, social and environmental pillars. The proposal would provide economic benefits by the use of local contractors and businesses for construction, maintenance and other servicing when in use. Social benefits would arise from the employment of local people, and the use of a presently vacant unit. The site is considered to be in a sustainable location due to its town centre location in Baldock. Therefore, the sustainability of the development is acceptable.

Design and Appearance:

- 4.3.4 Policy D1 of the Local Plan states that development will be granted provided the design of the development appropriately and positively responds to the site's local context together with other criteria to encourage a positive and sustainable form of development. This policy is broadly consistent with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Policy HE1 emphasises how permission will be refused where proposals would cause substantial harm or a loss of significance to a Heritage Asset, in this case, the Conservation Area and the listed building itself, and permission should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal is necessary to deliver considerable public benefits to outweigh this harm or loss. Policy SP13 emphasises how great weight

will be given to the potential harms to the significance of heritage assets, seeking their conservation and management of their setting. This policy is broadly consistent with Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) act 1990 emphasises that development should seek to the preservation or enhancement of the Conservation Area and listed building.

- 4.3.5 Externally, the proposed development would retain the appearance of the building. The introduction of the windows would be a minor addition and has previously received approval for windows in a similar location. Furthermore, the Council Conservation Officer has not objected to the proposed development. The proposed physical alterations would therefore not be harmful to the character and significance of Listed Building and the Conservation Area. The proposed uses, and the split of the building would reduce the internal layout available. It is noted that site has previously received permission to alter the layout to create a retail and bar unit. In the round, the design and conservation impacts would not be unacceptable.
- 4.3.6 The proposed development is therefore considered to be in compliance with Policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan and the core principles set out within Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The potential impacts to the surrounding Conservation Area are considered to be acceptable, and the significance of this heritage asset will not be unacceptably harmed. Policies HE1 and SP13 of the Local Plan 2011-2031 and Section 16 of the NPPF are considered to be complied with. The development is considered to comply with Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) act 1990. The design and appearance are therefore acceptable.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties:

- 4.3.7 Policy D3 of the Local Plan permits development that does not result in unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and where necessary encourages the use of mitigation measures to reduce these impacts. This is generally reflected by the provisions within the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.3.8 The site is in a town centre location and is unlikely to be significantly noise generating. The proposed use is unlikely to result in significant noise generation when compared to its previous use as a restaurant/public house. The nature of the operation is not advised as being during the early hours, with on-site operations commencing from 7am to prepare the bakery. There would be trip generation and patronage for both the bakery and the retail unit, however, this would not be significant. Environmental Health sought clarification on these matters and are satisfied with the nature and extent of the use and operation. I consider a suitably worded opening hours condition including this 7am start time would cover any prospective noise concerns for neighbouring properties. The provision of the widows is unlikely to allow for overlooking or for a loss of privacy to occupiers near to the site given their low level and location in relation to these nearby sites. No neighbour objections were received.
- 4.3.9 Given the above, it is considered that the proposed development would result in no unacceptable detrimental impact upon neighbouring occupiers and is therefore compliant with Policy D3 of the local plan and the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Environmental Implications:

- 4.3.10 The proposed development, by virtue of its limited scale in general terms together with the sustainable location would have no significant implications for the local environment in terms of carbon emissions and therefore would be generally in compliance with Section 14 of the NPPF.

Impact on Highway Network and Parking Levels:

- 4.3.11 The site is a town centre location and is therefore considered to be sustainable. Nearby to the site are bus stops and various opportunities for on-street parking at various tenures and stay times. Therefore, sufficient parking and public transport means are provided for patronage to the site. I do not consider that this would result in an oversubscription of the parking levels given the site's most recent uses as a public house and restaurant. Highways did not object to the proposal.
- 4.3.11 I do not consider that the development is likely to result in harm to local parking levels and would be unlikely to impact upon the safe operation of the highway locally. The development would therefore comply with Policies T1 and T2 of the Local Plan 2011-2031.

Other Matters:

- 4.3.12 Given the building is listed and the 'office space' would be adjacent to the kitchen and prep areas for the bakery, with this area requiring early preparation times, I consider it is prudent to restrict the change of use of the office into residential uses. This would reduce direct conflict between occupants and the operators, and would also retain a degree of control with regards the potential impacts to this heritage asset.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposed development is considered acceptable and is considered to comply with the necessary provisions of the Local Plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework. Grant conditional permission.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None applicable.

5.0 **Recommendation**

- 5.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting approved documents and plans listed above.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of permission.

3. The bakery use hereby approved shall only open and operate on the following basis:

Preparation shall not commence before 5am Monday to Saturday, or before 6am on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Customer trading hours shall not commence before 7am Monday to Saturday or 8am on Sundays and Bank Holidays and shall close by 5pm Monday to Saturday or 3pm on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

The premises shall be closed with no staff on site by 6pm Monday to Saturday, or 4pm on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Reason: The use is located in close proximity to residential properties and hotel rooms and the restriction of activity is necessary to ensure that the residents of those properties can continue to expect to enjoy times of reasonable peace and quiet and to comply with Policy D3 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

4. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 as amended no development as set out in Class MA of Part 3 (and any further new class that may be introduced by way of an update) of Schedule 2 to the Order, (or any subsequent Statutory Instrument which revokes, amends and/or replaces those provisions) shall be carried out without first obtaining a specific planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: Given the nature of this development, the Local Planning Authority considers that development which would normally be "permitted development" should be retained within planning control in the interests of the amenities afforded to nearby uses to comply with Policy D3 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

Biodiversity Net Gain

This development is not subject to the statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan condition because it is considered exempt under the statutory exemptions (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>) or transitional arrangements in respect of the biodiversity gain condition.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted proactively in line 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: 19 May 2026	