

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Henry Thomas.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/00804/FP	Proposed barn for stabling and garden machinery store (amended plans received 04.08.2025).	1 Church Cottages Bibbs Hall Lane Ayot St Lawrence Welwyn Hertfordshire AL6 9BZ

Submitted Plan Nos

S1 B2B 3548/20A 3548/21A

D1	Sustainable design
D3	Protecting living conditions
SP1	Sustainable development in North Herts
SP9	Design and Sustainability
T2	Parking
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN14	Meeting climate change,coastal,flooding
SECN13	Protecting Green Belt Land

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 None at the property.

2.2 Neighbouring properties:

2 Church Cottages

94/00947/1 – Land rear of 2 Church Cottages, detached stables/store building.

Conditional Permission.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Site Notice and Neighbour Notification** – None received.

3.2 **Kimpton Parish Council** – No comment to make.

3.3 **NHC Ecology** – No objection.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.2 The application site is paddock land used in connection with 1 Church Cottages on the north side of Bibbs Hall Lane in a residential part of Ayot St Lawrence. The site is located outside of any settlement boundary and lies within the Green Belt.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Planning permission is sought for a single storey stable block and store. The internal layout has been designed to allow for two horses to be kept, also allowing for hay, feed, tack and garden machinery storage.

4.2.2 The elevations will be finished with a tannolised shiplap boarding, black onduline roofing and capping. Doors are proposed be large barn style doors finished in same cladding. The boundary treatment will be timber fencing.

4.2.3 The proposed building will be L-shaped, approximately 10m deep, 18m wide with a gable roof peaking at 3.957m with eaves at 2.5m.

4.3 **Key Issues**

Principle of the use

4.3.1 The site is within the Green Belt. Paragraph 154 of the Framework advises that a local authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt with certain exceptions including those set out in sub-paragraph b) which states:

b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it

4.3.2 In this case the proposal is for a building in association with an equine use associated with the adjacent dwelling and not for any commercial purposes. Such a use can reasonably be described therefore as an outdoor recreational activity and therefore the proposed building and use would fall within those uses described in sub-paragraph b) of paragraph 154 of the Framework. The proposal is therefore considered to be an appropriate use within the Green Belt and no very special circumstances are required to be demonstrated.

4.3.3 There is also the question of whether the stable building would preserve the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. This is generally understood to be a spatial assessment. In this case, the building is to be located close to the dwellinghouse on the front boundary next to existing access with the paddock to the rear of the stable block opening up to open countryside. It is considered that given the above described context of the development the proposal would preserve the openness of the Green Belt.

4.3.4 Paragraph 154 of the Framework sets out the five purposes of Green Belt. Taking these in turn:

a) the proposed stable building is not in an urban area or adjacent to such an area therefore it will not result in the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

b) the location of the stable block is not between towns and would not result in towns merging into one another.

c) the proposal is a relatively modest recreational building with land retained around it and therefore would not result in encroachment into the countryside.

d) the location is not within a town and therefore does not affect the setting and special character of historic towns

e) the location is not within an urban area and therefore the purpose of assisting in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land does not apply.

Given the above analysis the proposal would not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.

4.3.5 In terms of the visual impact on the Green Belt due to the limited height of the building and its siting behind a hedge that is located along Bibbs Hall Lane it is considered that the visual impact on the Green Belt would be limited.

Design and appearance

4.3.6 The proposed stable building would be of a classic stable block footprint with a gable pitch. The shallow pitched roof would be typical of a rural stable building. The materials to be used are seen in many rural and equine related buildings. As such, I consider that the design and appearance of the building is appropriate to this rural location.

Access

4.3.7 Vehicular access to the building will be via an existing vehicular access off Bibbs Hall Lane. Given this proposal seeks to use an existing access and the proposal is for a residential stable, the proposal is unlikely to generate any significant increase in traffic.

Climate Change

- 4.3.8 The proposed development would be relatively small in scale and 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.

Biodiversity

- 4.3.9 The proposal and the submitted Biodiversity Gain Plan have been considered by the North Herts Ecologist and is considered acceptable. The proposal will be subject to the mandatory requirements of Biodiversity Net Gain under Article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.
- 4.3.10 Overall, the proposal would have an acceptable ecological impact subject to the mandatory BNG condition which would deliver measurable gains in biodiversity, in accordance with Policy NE4 of the Local Plan.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposed development is considered acceptable and in accordance with Policies SP1, SP9, D1, D2 and D3 of the NHLP 2011-2031 and Sections 2, 12 and 13 of the NPPF 2024.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 N/A

4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 N/A

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 development hereby granted permission shall be used solely for the private use in association with 1 Church Cottages, and shall not be used for or in connection with any commercial activity.

Reason: The site is within the Green belt wherein development for commercial purposes would not be allowed unless special reasons or justification is presented to allow the policy presumption against development to be relaxed.

Biodiversity Net Gain

1. The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:
 - (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
 - (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be North Hertfordshire District Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>).

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.

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 <i>Anne McDonald</i> Anne McDonald Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 6 August 2025	