

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Melissa Tyler.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/02048/FP	Raise existing roof ridge height of both properties and insertion of rear dormer windows and front rooflights to facilitate conversion of loft spaces into habitable accommodation. Single storey rear extension to no.29 following demolition of existing rear element.	29 - 30 Oughton Head Way Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 2LA

Submitted Plan Nos

HET_1869_01_B_ No 29- HET_1869_02_B_No 29 HET_1868_01_B_ No 30 HET_1868_02_B_ No 30

1.0 Policies

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 No. 30 Oughton Head Way –

20/01100/FPH Single storey rear extension following demolition of existing single storey lean to and provision of small raised patio. CONDITIONAL PERMISSION

2.2 26/00948/FP Raise existing roof ridge height of both properties and insertion of rear dormer windows and front rooflights to facilitate conversion of loft spaces into habitable accommodation. Single storey rear extension to no.29 following demolition of existing rear element. WITHDRAWN following recommendation to refuse.

Reason for refusal would have read

The proposed rear dormer extensions, by reason of their excessive scale, bulk and L-shaped form extending over the existing lower rear projection/outrigger, would fail to remain subordinate to the host dwellings and would not be sympathetic to their established form, proportions and roof hierarchy. The development would result in a visually intrusive and incongruous form of development that would harm the character and appearance of the host buildings and, through the erosion of traditional roof forms that contribute positively to local character, would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, causing less than substantial harm to the significance of this designated heritage asset. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies D1, D2 and HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031, Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the heritage and design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **None**

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 No.29 and 30 are a pair of semi-detached two-storey dwellings situated on the northern side of Oughton Head Way within a predominantly residential area of Hitchin. No.30 possesses a significant projection to the rear.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Planning Permission is sought for the raise existing roof ridge height of both properties and insertion of rear dormer windows and front rooflights to facilitate conversion of loft spaces into habitable accommodation. Single storey rear extension to no.29 following demolition of existing rear element

4.3 **Key Issues**

Principle of development

- 4.3.1 Policy SP2 (Settlement Hierarchy) states that development will be focused within the District's towns, including Hitchin, where development is supported in principle subject to compliance with the remainder of the Plan.
- 4.3.2 The principle of extending and altering the existing dwellings, including the provision of additional accommodation within the roofspace, and extension is acceptable in principle subject to detailed consideration of design, character and residential amenity impacts.
- 4.3.3 The amended scheme has overcome the principal concern arising from the withdrawn proposal. The rear dormers are now contained wholly within the main rear roof slopes and do not extend over or encroach upon the roofscape of the existing rear outriggers. The acceptability of the revised design is considered below.

Impact on Heritage Assets

- 4.3.4 The application site is located within the Butts Close Conservation Area where special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing its character and appearance in accordance with Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 4.3.5 Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan requires development affecting designated heritage assets, including conservation areas, to conserve and where possible enhance their significance, taking account of their special architectural and historic interest.
- 4.3.6 The modest increase in ridge height, front rooflights and the proposed single-storey rear extension to No. 29 are not considered to result in harm to the significance of the Conservation Area. The ridge height increase would not appear unduly prominent within the public realm and would preserve the established character of the pair of semis if development were to be built at the same time.
- 4.3.7 The amended rear dormers are confined to the main rear roof slopes and do not extend over or encroach upon the roofscape of the lower rear outriggers. The traditional distinction and hierarchy between the principal roofs and subordinate rear projections would therefore remain clearly legible. The dormers would be contained within the principal roof planes and would not appear unduly bulky or dominant in relation to the host dwellings.
- 4.3.8 While the dormers would introduce additional built form to the rear roof slopes, the revised siting and massing would retain the subordinate character of the outriggers and preserve the architectural composition of the pair of dwellings. Given their rear location and the retention of the established roof hierarchy, the amended scheme would preserve the character and appearance of the Butts Close Conservation Area and would cause no harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset.
- 4.3.9 The amended proposal therefore accords with Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031, Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the heritage objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Design and Appearance

- 4.3.10 Policy D1 (Sustainable Design) requires development proposals to respond positively to their local context, make a positive contribution to the appearance of the area, and be well integrated with surrounding buildings and land uses. Policy D2 (House extensions, replacement dwellings and outbuildings) requires extensions to be sympathetic to the existing house in height, form proportions, roof type, window details, materials and orientation.
- 4.3.11 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also a material consideration. Paragraph 135 of the NPPF requires that developments are visually attractive, sympathetic to local character, and contribute positively to the overall quality of an area. It further requires that development provides a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 4.3.12 The proposal comprises a modest increase in the ridge height of the pair of semi-detached dwellings, front rooflights, and the construction of rear dormer extensions to facilitate loft conversions. It also includes a single-storey rear extension to No. 29.
- 4.3.13 The increase in ridge height is limited in scale and, having regard to the prevailing character of the street and the existing roof form, would not result in a prominent or harmful feature within the street scene. Similarly, the proposed front rooflights would appear as subordinate additions and would not materially detract from the appearance of the host dwellings.
- 4.3.14 The proposed single-storey rear extension at No. 29 is considered acceptable in terms of its scale, design and relationship with the existing dwelling and neighbouring properties. Owing to its modest height and projection, it would remain subordinate to the host property and would not result in any significant harm to the character of the area.
- 4.3.15 The amended rear dormers are positioned wholly on the main rear roof slopes and do not extend over or encroach upon the roofscape of the existing rear outriggers. The lower eaves and ridge lines of those projections would remain clearly identifiable, thereby maintaining the established roof hierarchy and the traditional form and proportions of the dwellings.
- 4.3.16 By avoiding the outrigger roofs, the dormers would respect the visual distinction between the principal roofs and subordinate rear projections. Their revised scale, massing and siting would be proportionate to the host dwellings and would not result in a visually intrusive or incongruous form of development. The design objection to the previous scheme has therefore been satisfactorily addressed.
- 4.3.17 The amended proposal therefore accords with Policies SP9, D1 and D2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031, which seek high-quality design that responds positively to its context and preserves or enhances the character and appearance of an area. It also accords with the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Neighbour amenity

- 4.3.18 Policy D3 (Protecting Living Conditions) states that planning permission will be granted where proposals would not result in a significant detrimental impact on the living conditions of existing or future occupiers, including through overlooking, loss of privacy, overshadowing, or overbearing impact.

4.3.19 The proposed dormers would be located to the rear and would contain windows serving habitable accommodation. Whilst there would be some increase in opportunities for overlooking, it is not considered that the proposal would result in a level of overlooking materially different from that typically associated with loft conversions within established residential areas. The increase in ridge height and the single storey rear extension to No29 is modest and would not give rise to significant loss of light, overbearing impact or loss of outlook to neighbouring occupiers.

4.3.20 The proposal therefore complies with Policy D3 of the Local Plan, which seeks to protect residential amenity, and with the amenity objectives of the NPPF.

4.4 **Conclusion**

4.4.1 The principle of converting the loft spaces is acceptable, and no objection is raised to the proposed ridge-height increase, front rooflights or single-storey rear extension at No. 29. Crucially, the amended rear dormers are now contained wholly within the main rear roof slopes and do not extend over or encroach upon the roofscape of the existing lower outriggers. The revised development would consequently preserve the established form, proportions and roof hierarchy of the host dwellings, remain subordinate in appearance and avoid harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

4.4.2 The amended scheme has satisfactorily overcome the previous design and heritage concerns. It is acceptable in respect of design, heritage impact and neighbouring amenity and complies with the relevant provisions of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. Planning permission should therefore be granted, subject to appropriate conditions.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

4.5.1 None applicable.

5.0 **Recommendation**

5.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED**, subject to appropriate 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 extension(s) hereby permitted shall be built in external materials to match the existing dwellinghouse unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA.

Reason: To protect the visual amenities of the locality and to comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

5. The approved increase in ridge height, rear dormers and associated roof alterations to Nos. 29 and 30 Oughton Head Way shall be commenced concurrently and thereafter carried out as a single coordinated operation. The roof alterations to both dwellings shall be completed fully in accordance with the approved plans before any part of the additional accommodation hereby permitted is first occupied or brought into use.

Reason: To ensure that the symmetrical form, consistent ridge line and architectural integrity of the pair of semi-detached dwellings are maintained, and to preserve the character and appearance of the Butts Close Conservation Area, in accordance with Policies D1, D2 and HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Biodiversity Net Gain

1. 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. The Council acted proactively through positive engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage and during the determination process which led to improvements to the scheme. 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  Shaun Greaves Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 5 October 2026	