

## DELEGATED FILE NOTE

**CASE OFFICER:** ...Saffron Loasby.....

| APPLICATION<br>REFERENCE | BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF<br>DEVELOPMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | APPLICATION SITE                                       |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| 26/01691/FPH             | Two storey front extension. Part two storey and part single storey rear and side extensions including rear dormer window following demolition of existing single storey rear extension. Erection of detached outbuilding. Soft and hard landscaping to rear garden to include raised patio area with fencing, alterations to ground levels and erection of retaining wall. | 55 Benslow Lane<br>Hitchin<br>Hertfordshire<br>SG4 9RD |

### **Submitted Plan Nos**

3957 01F 3957 02A 3957 05N 3957 06Q 3957 07E

### **1.0 Policies**

- D1 Sustainable design
- D2 House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild
- D3 Protecting living conditions
- T2 Parking

## 2.0 **Site History**

- 2.1 26/00732/NCS – Single storey rear extension with the following dimensions: Length as measured from rear wall of original dwelling – 6.03m - Prior approval not required 12/05/2026
- 2.2 25/02880/PRE2 – Follow up pre-app advice in relation to 25/02154/PREH – Two storey rear, side and front elevations. Rear workshop and outbuilding – Case completed 20/01/2026
- 2.3 25/02154/PREH – Two storey rear, side and front elevations. Rear workshop and rear outbuilding- Case completed 17/10/2025
- 2.4 98/00460/HH – Single storey rear extension – Conditional Permission

## 3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 **Neighbour Consultation**– No neighbour representations received.

## 4.0 **Planning Considerations**

### 4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The application site comprises No. 55 Benslow Lane, a residential dwelling in Hitchin. The site is within the Conservation Area but does not comprise any listed structures. The dwelling is detached, and the land surrounding the dwelling sits on a hill, dropping from east down to the western side of the site.

## 4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 The application proposes a front two storey extension comprising a new porch at ground floor and an extension to the first-floor rear facing bedroom. To the rear a part two storey and part single storey extension is proposed. At first floor a new garden facing bedroom is proposed with en suite and dressing room and at ground floor a new kitchen living space is created that opens into the rear garden. To the side at ground floor the existing garage is converted into a storage space with front opening side hung doors and utility room beyond. At first floor is a new ensuite to the front bedroom, and increased family bathroom. Both these openings are shown as obscure glazed.
- 4.2.2 At second floor, in the new enlarged roof space is a new rear facing dormer window looking over the rear garden. Internally this space is shown as an additional bedroom with an ensuite bathroom and roof light openings in the east facing roof slope. Materials are proposed to match those of the existing dwelling.
- 4.2.2 In the rear garden along the rear most northern boundary a detached single storey flat roofed outbuilding is proposed as a home office with a toilet and shower room. Materials comprise vertical timber cladding on a brick plinth. A new retaining wall is also proposed where the garden is proposed to be levelled.

## 4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key issues in this case are the design of the development relative to the main dwelling and its surroundings, the impact the development has on the reasonable living conditions of the neighbouring properties and parking provision.

### Design

- 4.3.2 The proposed extensions have been reviewed through the Councils pre-application process prior to a formal planning application being submitted. Concern was initially raised over the extent and depth of the rear ground floor extension. Advice was given to enter the Neighbour Consultation Scheme allowing for a full assessment on neighbour impact. No objections were raised and therefore the projection of 5 metres from the existing rear elevation has been acceptable. Other elements of the proposal were less contentious and advice offered that the proposals, subject to materials were in keeping with the existing host dwelling.
- 4.3.3 The proposal would alter the existing front accessed garage located to the side of the dwelling, decreasing the internal layout for storage purposes only; albeit still accessible by the retained garage doors. Above is a first-floor extension proposing additional floorspace to the existing bedroom and bathroom. At ground floor the old garage space will provide both storage and utility space, with pedestrian level access into the rear garden.
- 4.3.4 The proposal seeks to use materials to match the existing comprising plain tiles and brown facing brickwork. The single storey extension to the rear is proposed to use vertical cladding as the external material. Whilst it is unclear as to whether this is timber or a composite material as it is on the rear elevation and with limited views from the public realm, either option would be considered acceptable. The materials and

design are considered sympathetic to the existing dwelling and would not result in an adverse effect on the character of the dwelling as seen from the public realm.

- 4.3.5 This is considered in line with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies D1, D2 and D3 of the Local Plan.

#### Impact on Neighbours

- 4.3.6 The design has been amended to take on board much of the design concerns raised by the pre-application submission and the NCS. As a result, the actual extensions will have minimal impact on the neighbouring properties and the occupiers. The impact of development by means of overlooking and being overbearing is acceptable.
- 4.3.7 There are no new openings at first floor that would present increased overlooking, and the proposals do not result in being unduly overbearing to either neighbouring occupier as a result of careful internal and external design, scale and orientation. First floor side windows to the bathroom and landing can be conditioned to be obscure glazed. Permitted development limitations will ensure the ongoing protection of neighbour amenity at first floor.
- 4.3.8 Overall, the proposal would have an acceptable impact on existing residential amenity and therefore accords with Policy D3 of the NHLP and Section 12 of the NPPF.

#### Highways and Parking

- 4.3.9 Notwithstanding the increase in the number of bedrooms and the loss of the garage the driveway has potential for up to 3 cars to be parked clear of the highway. Parking provision on site complies with Policy T2 of the NHLP, with adequate parking provision for the size of the property.

#### Environmental Implications

- 4.3.10 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.

#### Biodiversity Net Gain

- 4.3.11 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 to 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 GRANTED.

### **4.5 Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None

#### 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 extensions 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.

4. The ridge edges of the crown roof shall be finished in tiles to match the roof tiles 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.

#### **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.

|                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Signed</p> <p></p> <p>Anne McDonald</p> | <p>Development Management<br/>North Hertfordshire District Council<br/>Council Offices<br/>Gernon Road<br/>Letchworth<br/>Herts<br/>SG6 3JF</p> |
| <p>Determining Officer</p> <p><b>Date:</b> 8 September 2026</p>                                                             |                                                                                                                                                 |