DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Tom Rea.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
18/01365/FP	Erection of one 1-bed dwelling following demolition of existing workshop/store.	Land Adjacent To 39 Broadmead Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9LX

Submitted Plan Nos

E020 E002 E002 045 040 021 020 050.01

1.0 Policies

LP26 Housing Proposals

LP55	Car Parking Standards
LP57	Residential Guidelines and Standards
SECT7	Requiring Good Design

2.0 Site History

2.1 18/01184/FPH: Raised roof height and insertion of front rear and side dormer windows to facilitate loft conversion and front extension including storm porch: granted 26/6/18

(planning history relating to immediately adjacent residential property – No. 39 Broadmead)

3.0 Representations

3.1 **Site Notice/ Adjoining occupiers:** No representations received

3.2 **Hertfordshire Highways:** Does not wish to restrict the grant of planning permission – recommends a condition re surface water drainage and a highway informative

3.3 **NHDC Waste Services Manager:** Provides advice on waste storage and collection criteria and arrangements for collection.

3.4 The applicant has offered a grampian condition to secure the demolition of a side extension at the adjoining property at No. 39 Broadmead in the event that planning permission be granted for this development

3.5 An additional 'street scene drawing' (ref: 050.01 'Existing & Proposed Street Scene Elevations') was submitted on 13th June 2018.

4.0 Planning Considerations

4.1 Site and Surroundings

The application site comprises an area of land (0.05 hectares) located on the north side of Broadmead between No. 39 a detached residential property and the rear garden of No. 1 Manor Crescent. The site currently contains a brick built former garage and shed last used as workshop / store that appears to previously have formed part of the rear curtilage of No. 1 Manor Crescent. The buildings are now separated off from

No. 1 with a close boarded fence. Part of the site includes a side extension to No. 39 Broadmead. The site is located within a residential street comprising mainly of bungalows and chalet bungalows. Broadmead is an unclassified road.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 The proposal is to construct a detached chalet bungalow which would include a bedroom and study at first floor level and a kitchen / dining room and living room at ground floor level. The property would have a pitched roof with front and rear dormers and would be rendered with a tiled roof. Car parking is provided at the front of the premises directly off Broadmead. A rear garden of approximately 41 sqm would be provided. No details of landscaping are included with the application.

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 The key issues are the principle of the development, impact of the development on the character and appearance of the area, impact on living conditions and car parking and access.

4.3.2 **Principle of development**
The site is located within the urban area of Hitchin within which residential development is acceptable in principle. Broadmead itself is in a reasonably accessible location with local bus services nearby and the application site within walking distance of the town centre and local schools. Subject to an assessment of all other material planning considerations there can be no objection in my opinion to residential development in this location.

4.3.3 **Character and Appearance**
The surrounding pattern of development is that of post war estate housing comprising mainly of linear development along suburban streets with grassed verges and properties set back from the pavement boundary mostly with front curtilages including gardens set behind boundary walls or hedges with garages to the side. In Broadmead the character is defined mainly by low rise, low density housing consisting mainly of bungalows and chalet bungalows. Plot sizes vary but generally houses are established on plots around 10 m in width and over 30 metres in depth. Most back gardens would appear to comfortably exceed 10 metres in overall depth. Many properties in Broadmead have been extended and there are a variety of roof styles including gable roofs and hipped roofs.

4.3.4 Poplar Close is located to the rear of No. 39 and consists of pairs of two storey semi-detached houses. Although at a higher density than Broadmead, the close displays similar street features such as front gardens behind boundary walls and hedges.

4.3.4 Planning permission has recently been given for the extension of the immediately adjoining property at No. 39 involving the raising of its roof and a front extension (see ref: 18/01184/FPH above). There is no indication that this development would not go ahead.

4.3.5 The proposed house would be sited close to the flank wall of No. 39 with a gap of 1 metre to allow for pedestrian access to the rear of the new property. The submitted street scene drawing 045.01A indicates that at eaves level the gap would be reduced to about 700mm. The ridgeline of the extended No. 39 would be about 1.3 metres higher than the ridgeline of the proposed new house.

4.3.6 In my opinion the gap between the flank walls of the new house and No. 39 would be unusually close when comparing the gaps between other properties in the road and this would be accentuated by the gabled roof design of both properties. In addition the corner plot of No. 1 Manor Crescent would lose its sense of spaciousness through the introduction of a one and half storey dwelling tight up to its rear back garden boundary. The reduced gaps between dwellings as proposed would be harmful to the locality's distinctive character in my view.

4.3.7 The proposed property would be a noticeably smaller property than those surrounding it and this would be particularly apparent by the limited space around it and the main entrance door having to be squeezed in between the main flank wall and the rear boundary of No. 1 Manor Crescent. The gable roof of the eastern elevation encroaches over the boundary with No. 1 Manor Crescent emphasising the cramped nature of the development.

4.3.8 The proposals will result in a very small garden for the proposed dwelling and a large proportion of the front curtilage being hardsurfaced for off-road parking. There is very little scope for additional landscaping around the dwelling to mitigate its impact. These elements of the proposals reinforces my view that there is insufficient space to accommodate a new dwelling on the site and protect the character and appearance of the area.

4.3.9 It is acknowledged that the proposal is for a small one bedroom dwelling (although the study could be counted as a second bedroom) and that the layout of it meets the minimum requirements of amenity area and parking required by Policies 55 and 57 of the local plan and the minimum space standards as advocated by the Government's 'Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard'. However, meeting minimum standards does not necessarily equate to an acceptable standard of development and the constrained nature of the site is not compatible with the settlement pattern and the character of the area.

4.3.10 The cramped nature of the development proposed dwelling would be clearly visible when passing the site in both directions along Broadmead and this adds to the harmful impact of the proposals.

4.3.11 In view of the above issues I conclude that the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area conflicting with Saved Policies 26 and 57 of the Local Plan which seek to ensure that new development protects locally distinctive features and is compatible with the established character of the area.

4.3.12 **Living conditions**

Approximately 41 sqm of rear garden is provided. However, the garden is north facing and enclosed by fencing and the high gable wall of the proposed extended dwelling at No. 39 Broadmead. As such the living conditions of the prospective occupiers would be compromised. However the development is unlikely to directly and significantly affect the living conditions of existing residents

4.3.13 **Parking and access**

Adequate parking is proposed for the proposed size of the dwelling and it is noted that the existing dropped kerb access is to be used. No objections are raised by the highway authority.

4.3.14 **Planning balance**

It is acknowledged that that the Council cannot at present confirm that it has a five year land supply however this is unlikely to be the case for too much longer given that the Local Plan Examination in Public has concluded and adoption of the emerging local plan is expected within the next 6 – 8 months. Nevertheless the current out of date local plan and lack of a five year housing land supply is sufficient to trigger the presumption in favour of sustainable development as required by paragraph 14 of the NPPF and the assessment of whether the adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

4.3.15 Paragraphs 56, 60 and 64 of the Framework state that; a) good design is a key aspect of sustainable development; b) it is proper to reinforce local distinctiveness; and c) poorly designed development which fails to take the opportunity to improve the character and quality of an area should be refused. For the reasons set out above I consider that the development would fail to comply with these requirements and that the resultant adverse environmental harm would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the social and economic benefits of providing one additional dwelling in a sustainable location towards the Council's housing land supply shortfall and to a lesser degree, helping to sustain local community facilities and the provision of local employment opportunities during construction.

4.3.16 **Conclusion**
The proposal will be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and the social and economic benefits do not outweigh the identified harm and conflict with planning policy. As such the development should be refused planning permission.

5.0 **Recommendation**

5.1 That planning permission be **REFUSED** for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development would represent an unduly cramped and contrived form of development which would be at odds with the established character and pattern of development within the area. As a consequence the proposed development would cause significant and demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the locality which outweighs the benefits of delivering a new home on this site, contrary to Saved Policies 26 and 57 of the North Hertfordshire District Local Plan No. 2 - with Alterations and Section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework

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 (paragraphs 186 and 187) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Signed  Simon Ellis Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 13 July 2018	