

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/01421/FPH	Installation of rear hard standing and rear access gates to provide two car parking spaces following demolition of existing section of listed wall. (Development already carried out).	68 Queen Street Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9TS

Submitted Plan Nos

Location Plan 1025-02 DP-1025-01-Rev-B

1.0 Policies

D1	Sustainable design
HE1	Designated heritage assets
HE3	Non-designated heritage assets

SECN16 Conserve + enhance historic environment

SP13 Historic environment

SP9 Design and Sustainability

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 None relevant

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 Site Notice / Adjacent occupiers: No responses received

3.2 Conservation officer: No response

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 No 68 is a terraced two storey property located on the west side of Queen Street. The main house fronts Queen Street forming a terrace with two other similar designed dwellings built in 1875. The property has a long rear garden, the northern and western boundary of which adjoins the Jill Grey Place housing development. The property is Grade II listed as part of a group of terraced stepped houses. The site is also within the Hitchin Conservation Area.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 The applicant seeks retrospective planning permission for the formation of a vehicular access and parking area and erection of timber entrance gates at the rear of the property at 68 Queen Street, Hitchin

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 Design and layout/ Impact on the surroundings

- 4.3.2 To the immediate north of No. 68 is the Jill Grey Place residential development built in the early 1990's. In the vicinity of the application site there is a large hardstanding area in tarmac with garages, boundary walls and boundary fences enclosing this parking area which serves several of the Jill Grey Place dwellings.
- 4.3.3 The development consists of a small break (approximately 2 metres) in an existing lengthy garden wall to provide the vehicular access. A brick pier denotes the end of the wall and the making good of the opening uses soft red bricks, mortar and pointing similar to the existing. The use of vertical timber boarding for gates is similar to the close boarding fencing used in the adjacent Jill Grey development. The use of red block pavers is a better quality hardsurfacing material and visually superior than the adjacent tarmac used in the Jill Grey Place parking forecourt.
- 4.3.4 The principle of parking in this back land area has been established by the Jill Grey Place development and the development will provide a small extension of this area. The parking area within the rear garden of No. 68 is limited to one space and a turning area with the vast majority of the garden area remaining as it previously existed.

In visual terms the site is well contained within a private garden with high boundary walls and the approach to the site through a private drive means that there is no impact on the public realm.

- 4.3.5 Give the above, it is considered that the design and layout of the development and materials used is sympathetic to the main house and its immediate surroundings and therefore represents good design that responds positively to its local context. The development is consistent with Policy SP9, HE1 and D1 of the North Herts Local Plan.

4.3.6 Impact on heritage assets

- 4.3.7 The application is supported by a heritage statement (HS) that describes the site and surrounding heritage assets and describes their significance as required by the Framework.
- 4.3.8 In this case, the main assets are the Grade II group of terraced houses, the Hitchin Conservation area and No. 69 as a non designated asset building of local interest
- 4.3.9 The development is confined to a small area at the rear of No. 68 and the general form and character of No. 68 has not changed and the internal and external appearance of the dwelling is not be affected.
- 4.3.10 The HS describes the impact of the development on the heritage assets as follows:

'..The only alteration has been the removal of small section of the historic garden wall at the far western end of the curtilage of the property which lies adjacent to the Jill Grey development constructed in late 1989 / early 1990's. Apart from the removal of a short section of garden wall, the property retains its historic fabric so that it is still possible to understand the appearance and function of the building and its curtilage throughout its history. The listed elements as described in the official listing description are not affected by the development. The vast majority of the original garden wall remains and with the inserted gates the property maintains its domestic garden and its enclosed, secluded

character at its western end. The inserted timber gates are traditionally constructed with vertical boarding braced on the internal elevation with black painted ironmongery. The design is appropriate for this conservation area setting and in keeping with the boundary treatment in the immediate vicinity which includes brick walls and vertical timber fencing and gates. The driveway is of block pavers a traditional form of hardsurfacing material appropriate for use in Conservation Areas. The gates open inwards into the site thus not encroaching onto the shared turning space to the north or obstructing access to adjacent property. The development is located off a private drive and turning area to the adjacent Jill Grey Place development to which there is no public access or right of way. Accordingly, the development has no impact on the public realm or the wider character and appearance of the Hitchin Conservation Area.'

The development, by reason of its small scale, appropriate materials and discreet location is considered to have a neutral impact on the setting of the Grade II listed building and the Hitchin Conservation Area as a whole and does not conflict with the affected heritage asset's conservation or Policy HE1 ('Designated heritage assets') and Policy HE3 ('Non-designated heritage assets') of the North Herts Local Plan 2011 – 2031

- 4.3.11 I would agree in general terms with the summary of the HS and that the development could be assessed as having a neutral impact on the setting and significance of the heritage assets affected.

4.3.12 Parking and access

- 4.3.13 The access to the parking area is via the entrance to Jill Grey Place off Queen Street and an underpass that leads into the existing car parking and turning area serving the Jill Grey Place properties. The applicant has the right of access. There is no change to the existing access arrangements. The hardstanding area the subject of this application can accommodate two cars when the gate is closed which is more than sufficient to meet the needs of the property even though it is in a sustainable location.

4.3.14 Impact on neighbouring property

- 4.3.15 The development generates only a small additional amount of vehicular movement which when considered against the overall number of vehicular movements into and out of Jill Grey Place by the existing 11 properties is considered insignificant.
- 4.3.16 The development has existed for several years and there has been no response from neighbours to consultation or the application being advertised. It is considered that the development does not conflict with Policy D3 of the North Herts Local Plan.

4.3.17 Climate change and Biodiversity Net Gain

- 4.3.18 This retrospective householder development is exempt from the need to demonstrate a 10% biodiversity net gain under the Environment Act legislation.
- 4.3.19 By reason of its small scale the development has very limited impact on local climate change.

4.4 **Conclusion**

4.4.1 The development is acceptable in planning and conservation terms.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

4.5.1 None applicable

5.0 **Recommendation**

5.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED**

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. 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: 15 July 2025	

