

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Vicki Wood.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/01460/FP	Installation of illuminated defibrillator and bleed kit cabinets to external wall (as amended by plans received on 20th July 2026).	25 Leys Avenue Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 3EP

Submitted Plan Nos

Location Plan EX.01.E1 EX.01.E2 EX.01.E3 PR.01.E2 (A) PR.01 E2 (A)

1.0 Policies

1.0 **National Planning Policy Framework (2024)**

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places

Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

1.1 **North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031)**

Strategic Policies

Policy SP1 - Sustainable development in North Herts

Policy SP4 – Town Centre, Local Centres and Community Shops

Policy SP9 – Design and sustainability

Policy SP10 – Healthy Communities

Policy SP13 – Historic environment

1.2 Development Management Policies

Policy ETC3 – New retail, leisure and other main town centre development

Policy ETC4 – Primary Shopping Frontages

Policy D1 – Sustainable Design

Policy D3 – Protecting Living Conditions

Policy HE1 – Designated heritage assets

2.0 Relevant Site History

- 2.1 Planning permission was granted under 14/01080/1 for change of use, conversion and extension of Commerce House including addition of third floor to provide 21 x 2 bed apartments and 5 x 1 bedroom apartments at upper levels, following partial demolition of existing building. Demolition of 23/25 Leys Avenue and erection of three storey building comprising 275 sq m flexible Class A1-A4 floorspace at ground floor and 10 x 2 bedroom apartments and 2 x 1 bedroom apartments at upper levels. Demolition of existing outbuilding on land adjacent to 21 Leys Avenue and erection of a three storey building with accommodation in roof space comprising 224 sq m flexible Class A1-A4 floorspace at ground floor and 5 x 2 bed apartments and 4 x 1 bed apartments at upper levels. Demolition of covered entrance to Garden Square Shopping Centre, associated car parking spaces and ancillary works.

- 2.2 Full site history on case file.

3.0 Representations

- 3.1 **Press, Site and Neighbour Notification** – None received.

- 3.2 **LGCHF** – None received.

- 3.3 **Environmental Health (Air Quality)** – No objection.

- 3.4 **Highway Authority** – No objection subject to Informative.

4.0 Planning Considerations

- 4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The building is located on the southern side of Leys Avenue, immediately south of the town square and fountain area, and forms part of the primary shopping frontage within Letchworth town centre. The premises are currently occupied by Nationwide Building Society and benefits from dual frontages, with the northern elevation facing Leys Avenue and the eastern elevation facing the covered shopping area of Commerce Way. Whilst the ground floor is in commercial use, the upper floors comprise residential units.
- 4.1.2 Although not relevant to this application, it is noted that the site is covered by an Article 4 Direction Order which removes permitted development rights under The Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) in relation to change of use from Use Class E to C3.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Installation of illuminated defibrillator and bleed kit cabinets to external wall (as amended by plans received on 20th July 2026).
- 4.2.2 The application is supported by a Planning Statement.
- 4.2.3 The application has been amended to relocate the proposed units from either side of the principal entrance doorway located on the corner of the building, which is the building's main architectural feature to the northern elevation. This amendment seeks to reduce their prominence on the building whilst maintaining a prominent position within the street scene.

4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are as follows:
- The acceptability of the design of the proposed development and its resultant impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
 - The impact that the proposed development would have on the living conditions of neighbouring properties.
 - The impact that the proposed development would have on car parking provision in the area.
 - The impact that the proposed development would have on the environment.

Impact on Heritage Assets

- 4.3.2 Within a Conservation Area, the Council has a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, in accordance with Section 72 of the Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act (1990). Furthermore, Section 16 of the NPPF sets out guidance relating to sustaining and enhancing heritage assets. In this regard, Policy HE1 of the Local Plan is consistent with the NPPF.
- 4.3.3 When considering the impact of proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset (such as a listed building and Conservation Area), the NPPF notes that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation; the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.
- 4.3.4 Following an informal discussion with the Council's Conservation Officer on the 13 July 2026, it was concluded that subject to the submission of amended plans showing a revision position of the units, the development would not result in any significant harm

to the character or appearance of the conservation area. As such, no objection has been raised on heritage grounds. The development is therefore considered to accord with Policy HE1 of the Local Plan and Section 16 of the NPPF.

Design

- 4.3.5 The objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include those seeking to secure the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places (Section 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places). Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that “*Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable communities*”. In this regard, Policy D1 of the Local Plan are consistent with the objectives set out within the NPPF.
- 4.3.6 The proposed development would see the installation of a defibrillator and bleed kit on the ground floor north facing elevation of the building.
- 4.3.7 The proposed units are small in scale and incorporate a degree of internal illumination which is an essential component of their functioning, ensuring that they always remain visible and legible throughout the day and night.
- 4.3.8 In view of the above, I am satisfied that the proposed development is in accordance with Policies ETC3, ETC4 and D1 of the Local Plan and Sections 2 and 12 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties

- 4.3.9 A core planning principle set out in the NPPF is to always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. This principle is reflected in the provisions of Policy D3 of the Local Plan.
- 4.3.10 No objections have been received.
- 4.3.11 Given the location of the proposed units adjacent to existing commercial premises, together with their limited scale and modest level of internal illumination, it is considered that the proposal would not give rise to any significant harm to the amenities of adjoining occupiers, including the residential units located on the upper floors, and is in accordance with Policy D3 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Parking

- 4.3.12 The proposed development would not impact existing parking arrangements.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Requirements

- 4.3.13 The development is not subject to the statutory biodiversity gain condition, as it falls within one of the exemptions set out in paragraph 17 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024

Environmental Implications

- 4.3.14 Section 14 of the NPPF sets out how the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future. The principles set out in Section 14 are reflected in Policy D1 of

the Local Plan, which sets out that development proposal should take all reasonable opportunities to reduce energy consumption and waste, retain existing vegetation and propose new appropriate planting, and future proof for changes in technology and lifestyle.

- 4.3.15 The proposed development, would have no significant implications for the local environment in terms of carbon emissions and therefore would be generally in compliance with Policy D1 of the Local Plan and Section 14 of the NPPF.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposed development is considered to comply with Policies ETC3, ETC4, D1, D3 and HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011-2031) and Sections 2, 12, 14 and 16 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.

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 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.

Informative/s:

1. The technical description of the units refers to efficient internal LED illumination making the unit highly visible at night. The unit is potentially visible from the public highway, and the level of illumination should therefore not exceed the maximum night time value recommended in the in the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) Technical Note 5 The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements including Digital Displays (PLG05/23).

Signed  Sarah Kasparian	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 4 August 2026	