

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Henry Thomas.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/02291/FPH	Two storey rear extension with solar roof panels, following demolition of existing conservatory, existing single storey rear extension and two rear dormer windows.	2 Eastholm Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 4TN

Submitted Plan Nos

3866 01B 3866 02 3866 04B 3866 05B

1.0 Policies

D1 Sustainable design

D2	House exts, replcmnt dwellings outbuild
D3	Protecting living conditions
SP1	Sustainable development in North Herts
SP9	Design and Sustainability
T2	Parking
HE1	Designated heritage assets
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN16	Conserve + enhance historic environment

2.0 **Relevant Site History**

- 2.1. 24/02292/LBC - Two storey rear extension with solar roof panels, following demolition of existing conservatory, existing single storey rear extension and two rear dormer windows, and internal alterations.

Concurrent application

- 2.2 17/00083/1LB - Replacement single garage and studio with pitched roof link between garage and main house.

Conditional Permission.

- 2.3 15/02294/1HH & 15/02295/1LB - Replacement single garage and studio with pitched roof link between garage and main house.
Conditional Permission / Consent.
- 2.4 14/03266/1HH & 14/03323/1LB - Replacement single garage including a pitched link roof between garage and main house.
Refused.
- 2.5 14/00405/1LB - Replacement of 13no. windows with timber framed double glazed windows.
Withdrawn.
- 2.6 09/00612/1HH - Detached single garage with store following demolition of existing.
Conditional Consent.
- 2.7 06/02322/1HH & 06/02324/1LB - Rear conservatory following demolition of existing (as amended by plan received on 25 January 2007).
Conditional Permission / Consent.
- 2.8 06/02324/1LB - Rear conservatory following demolition of existing (as amended by plan received on 25 January 2007).
Conditional Consent.
- 2.9 05/00049/1LB - Replace existing glazed door in north side elevation with square topped boarded door to match pattern of existing front door
Conditional Consent.

3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 **Press, Site and Neighbour Notifications** – One neutral comment received. Their comment is summarised as:

“no objection to the principal of extending 2 Eastholm [however], the scale and dominance of the proposal affect 1 Eastholm. The width and depth of the proposal would affect the character of the cottage style of the Parker Unwin listed building. The extension is double the width of the existing house. A rather unfortunate overbearing relationship with number 1 as its rear elevation will face the proposal due to the corner geometry. The Cat slide rear roof feature and 2 rear dormer windows will be lost as noted in the application (acknowledge part slide has been retained).”

The full comment is available on the NHC website.

- 3.2 **NHC Conservation Officer** – Objection.

Nos. 1 and 2 Eastholm are a grade II listed pair of semi-detached houses with an angled footprint occupying a prominent corner position at the entrance to Eastholm. The significance of this pairing is in part attributed to them being architecturally designed by B Parker and R Unwin in

1906. The proposal would result in the loss of fabric including two rear dormer windows, a ground floor rear window and a catslide rear projection. By reason of its height, width, depth, mass and overall impact upon the splayed built form, the extension would occasion harm to the special character of both nos.1 and 2 Eastholm and also harm the special character of the Letchworth Conservation Area. The extension would fail to satisfy the provisions of Sections 16(2) (LBC only), 66(1) (FPH only) and 72(1) (both applications) of the Planning (LB & CA) Act 1990 and will not accord with Section 16 of the Framework and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031.

3.3 **Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation** – None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The application site is a semi-detached two storey dwelling on the west side of Eastholm in a residential part of Letchworth Garden City. The attached neighbour of 1 Eastholm is a corner plot and is angled to form a frontage onto Wilbury Road forming an obtuse L-shape / wing. The dwellings are Grade II listed which the entry reading as follows:

Pair of semi-detached houses. 1905-6, by B Parker and R Unwin. Roughcast over brick; gabled plain tile roof; brick ridge stacks. L plan. One storey and attic; 6-window range. Wood casements with glazing bars to all windows. Central 2-storey canted bay window at angle to two wings; gabled projections with 3-light windows and round-arched plank doors set in continuous lean-to projections which extend towards centre; 3 gabled 2-light dormer windows set over 2-light windows. Gabled dormers and similar fenestration to rear. Interior: simply treated, with staircases rising between partition walls and plank doors.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Two storey rear extension with solar roof panels, following demolition of existing conservatory, existing single storey rear extension and two rear dormer windows.

4.2.2 The rear extension would be 5.1m deep, 7.8m wide with eaves at 4.54m and a ridge at 7.13m. The proposed extension would have a dual rear gable. The proposed materials are white roughcast render walls, white timber flush casement windows and clay plain tile roof.

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are as follows:

- The impact of the development upon the Grade II listing.
- The acceptability of the design of the proposed development and its resultant impact on the character and appearance of the locality.

- The impact that the proposed development would have on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.
- The impact that the proposed development would have on car parking provision in the area.
- The impact that the development would have on the environment.

Impact on Designated Heritage Assets:

- 4.3.2 Paragraph 129 sets out that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 4.3.3 Paragraph 212 of the NPPF states “when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be).”
- 4.3.4 Paragraph 213 of the NPPF sets out that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.
- 4.3.5 Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states “where a development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing optimum viable use”.
- 4.3.6 Policy HE1 of the NHC Local Plan supports development that “Enables the heritage asset to be used in a manner that secures its conservation and preserves its significance; b) Incorporate a palette of materials that make a positive contribution to the local character or distinctiveness, where it is appropriate and justified; and c) Will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated asset, and this harm is outweighed by the public benefits of the development, including securing the asset’s optimum viable use.”
- 4.3.7 The proposed two storey rear extension would be a disproportionate addition to the dwelling that would seek to unbalance the pair of semi-detached dwellings. The conservation officer has raised an objection to the proposed work stating that:
- “The width and twin-gabled design would be a dominant form and would require the removal of considerable fabric and would significantly impact upon the linear splayed or angled plan form of the host building. Whilst paired gables are a feature of some dwellings in the conservation area, in this particular case they do not relate well to the host building”*
- 4.3.8 It is therefore considered that the proposal would have a detrimental impact upon the character and the significance of the designated heritage assets that outweighs any public benefits of the proposal. As such, the proposal would fail to comply with the NPPF section 16 and HE1 of the North Herts Local Plan. No convincing justification has been submitted to support an argument for optimal viable use.

Design and Appearance:

- 4.3.8 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 places). Paragraph 126 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 and D2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan are consistent with the objectives set out within the NPPF.
- 4.3.9 Policy D1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan sets out that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that respond positively to the site’s local context, create or enhance the public realm, and reduce energy consumption and waste.
- 4.3.10 Policy D2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan sets out that planning sets out that planning permission for house extensions will be granted where the extension is sympathetic to the existing house in height, form, proportions, roof type, window details, materials, and the orientation of the main dwelling.
- 4.3.11 Policy D2 goes on to state that “extensions should not dominate adjoining properties... and that spacing between buildings ensures there is no harm to the character and appearance of the street scene”.
- 4.3.12 The proposed rear extension would constitute a disproportionate addition to the dwelling that would almost double the depth of the existing dwelling. As seen from the north and south elevations, the extension would not be considered subordinate in scale to the dwelling. This proposal would therefore fail to respond positively to the site’s local context and therefore is contrary to the provisions of Policy D1 and D2 of the Local Plan.

Impact on Neighbouring Occupiers:

- 4.3.13 The objectives of the NPPF seek to ensure that developments secure a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers (Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places). This principle is reflected in the provisions set out in Policy D2 and D3 of the North Herts Local Plan.
- 4.3.14 Policy D3 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan sets out that planning permission will be granted for developments proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions.
- 4.3.15 The proposed two storey rear extension would have a significant projection. Due to the existing two storey attached garage, the extension would be sufficiently screened from the detached neighbour. However, I consider that the development would be highly visible and would have a detrimental impact upon the outlook of the attached neighbour, due to the orientation of their rear elevation and the proposed depth. Whilst it is acknowledged that the gable roof would reduce its visual bulk, I still consider this proposal to occasion material overbearing harm upon the reasonable living conditions and well-being of this neighbour. The proposal is therefore considered contrary to Policy D3 of the Local Plan.

Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.16 Policy T1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan states that “planning permission will be granted provided that... development would not lead to highway safety problems or cause unacceptable impacts upon the highway network”.
- 4.3.17 Policy T2 states that “planning permission will be granted provided that... proposal have regard to relevant Supplementary Planning Documents”.
- 4.3.18 The proposal would result in the creation of a fourth bedroom. The site benefits from a large front garden parking area, as such would satisfy the requirements set out under Policy T2.

Environmental Implications:

- 4.3.19 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 North Hertfordshire 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.
- 4.3.20 The proposed development, by virtue of its limited scale in general terms together with the sustainable location would have no significant implications for the local environment in terms of carbon emissions and therefore would be generally in compliance with Section 14 of the NPPF and Policy D1.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 4.3.9 This is a householder application which is exempt from BNG legislation defined under article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

4.4 Conclusion

- 4.4.1 The proposed development, would constitute a disproportionate addition that would seek to unbalance the pair of semi-detached dwellings. The proposed extension would be an unsympathetic addition that would have a detrimental impact upon the character and the significance of the designated heritage assets. The harm identified would not be outweighed by any public benefits of the scheme. Therefore, the proposal would fail to satisfy Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Section 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework and the aims of Policy D1, D2, D3 and HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

4.4. Alternative Options

- 4.5.1. N/A

5.0 **Recommendation**

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

1. The proposed extension would result in the loss of fabric including two rear dormer windows, a ground floor rear window and a catslide rear projection. By reason of its height, width, depth, mass and overall impact upon the splayed built form, the extension would be a disproportionate addition that occasions harm to the special character of both nos.1 and 2 Eastholm and also harm the special character of the Letchworth Conservation Area. The extension would fail to satisfy the provisions of Sections 16(2) (LBC only), 66(1) (FPH only) and 72(1) (both applications) of the Planning (LB & CA) Act 1990 and will not accord with Section 12 and 16 of the Framework and Policy D1, D2 and HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2031
2. The proposed development, by reason of the height and scale would give rise to an overbearing impact on and general loss of amenity to neighbouring occupiers to the detriment of their living conditions. The proposal would fail to provide and maintain an adequately high standard of environment resulting in an overdevelopment of the site contrary to the provisions of Policy D3 of the Local Plan 2011 - 2031.

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 (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: 10 March 2025	