



PLANNING APPLICATIONS WEEKLY LIST NO.1783
Week Ending 14th November 2025

NOTE:

- (i). Decision Notices will be issued in accordance with the following recommendations unless **ANY MEMBER** wishes to refer any application to the Development Committee on the 27th November 2025
- (ii). Notification of any application that is to be referred must be received no later than 1:00pm on Wednesday **19th November 2025** this needs to include the application number, address and the planning reasons for the referral via email to the PBC Technical Support team pbctechnicalsupport@rochford.gov.uk .If an application is referred close to the 1.00pm deadline it may be prudent for a Member to telephone PBC Technical Support to ensure that the referral has been received prior to the deadline.
- (iii) Any request for further information regarding applications must be sent to Corporate Services via email.

Note

Do ensure that, if you request a proposal to go before Committee rather than be determined through officer delegation following a Weekly List report, you discuss your planning reasons with Emma Goodings Director of Place. A planning officer will then set out these planning reasons in the report to the Committee.

Glossary of suffix's:-

Outline application (OUT), Full planning permission (FUL), Approval of Reserved Matters (REM), S106 legal obligation modification (OBL), Planning in Principle (PRINCI), Advertisement Consent (ADV), Listed Building Consent (LBC).

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Application No :	25/00670/FUL Zoning : No allocation
Case Officer	Mr Harry Goodrich
Parish :	Ashingdon Parish Council
Ward :	Hockley And Ashingdon
Location :	31 Nelson Road Rochford Essex
Proposal :	New outbuilding for use as dog grooming business

SITE AND PROPOSAL

1. The proposed site sits within the residential settlement of Rochford. The site forms part of a well-established residential estate. The site is a detached dwelling, on a corner plot and accessed through an off-road parking provision.
2. The proposed development involves the erection of a new outbuilding within the curtilage of 31 Nelson Road to be utilises as a dog grooming business. The building will have a timber appearance externally, with windows in each elevation as well as glazed double doors for access. The building is to be approximately 3.7m x 2.4m and have a shallow pitched roof with an overall height of around 2.4m.
3. The use would operate for one dog groomer and between the hours of
09:00hrs – 20:00hrs Monday to Friday
09:00hrs – 15:00hrs Saturday and Sunday.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4. Application No. 99/00610/FUL - Erect 73 Dwellings with Garages, Estate Roads and Associated Infrastructure Including Public Open Spaces. - Permitted.
5. Application No. 07/00128/FUL - Side and rear extensions to property. Loft conversion with front and rear dormers and window to side elevation at first floor level. – Permitted.
6. Application No. 21/01001/FUL - Proposed single storey pitched roof side extension and single storey rear extension (conservatory). – Permitted.

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

7. The proposed development must be assessed against relevant planning policy and with regard to any other material planning considerations. In determining this application regard must be had to section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004,

which requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

8. The relevant parts of the adopted Development Plan are the Rochford District Core Strategy (2011), the Allocations Plan (2014) and the Development Management Plan (2014).
9. Section 11 of the Council's Core Strategy (2011) discusses the economic development objectives of the district. Paragraph 11.19 states; "The District is entrepreneurial in character, and small and medium sized businesses contribute significantly to the area's employment and economy. The Council supports the protection and enhancement of small and medium sized businesses, both within the existing industrial estates and town centres and those existing enterprises in rural locations, which are important to the local economy. The Council also acknowledges the important role that homeworking can play in the local economy through retaining employment opportunities within the district and the development of the Third Sector through enhancing local volunteering opportunities as encouraged in the Sustainable Community Strategy."
10. The proposed development is to take place within a newly proposed outbuilding within the rear garden of the site. The proposal is to enable one dog groomer with up to three dogs at any one time. Policy DM33 of the Council's Development Management Plan (2014) states that proposals for uses operating businesses from dwellings, which will require planning permission will be supported provided that the use:

- (i) *remains linked to the residential use, and residential remains the primary use;*

The dwelling is to remain in a primary residential use, with the outbuilding being used by a singular dog groomer on an appointment only basis.

- (ii) *will not result in a residential dwelling that fails to meet the floorspace standards set out in Policy DM4;*

The proposed development will not alter the residential floorspace for the dwelling.

- (iii) *will not have a significant adverse effect on residential amenity;*

The proposed development will take place inside the existing residential amenity space of the dwelling. The proposed outbuilding of itself could be constructed using the benefits of permitted development and as such in other circumstances would not require planning consent for its construction. The application therefore must be assessed on the proposed end use of the building. The proposed grooming is to be via appointment only, with a maximum of 3 dogs on site at any one time.

This is to stop vehicles waiting in the highway. The proposed usage is therefore considered low level, and the erection of the building is such that this will lessen the overall impact on residential amenity as the enterprise will be contained within the proposed building itself.

- (iv) *will not have a detrimental effect upon the visual character of the surrounding residential area; and*

The proposed erection and visual presence of the building is unlikely to have a significant detrimental impact on the character of the surrounding residential area. This is given its location to the rear of the property, away from the public domain and that the shed like building would be of a scale that is reflective of a domestic outbuilding within this setting. The building would have an eaves of 2.4m in height and set within a recessed area in the rear garden. As such the site retains rear garden space and does not result in overdevelopment of the wider site.

- (v) *will not create on street parking or unacceptable highway problems.*

The impact of the proposal on the highway network has been considered by Essex County Council as the highway authority. They have concluded that the proposed development is not considered to result in unacceptable impacts on highways safety and have not recommended any required conditions.

11. Policy ED1 of the Core Strategy (2011) states that; *“The Council will encourage development that enables the economy to diversify and modernise through the growth of existing businesses and the creation of new enterprises providing high value employment, having regard to environmental issues and residential amenity.”* The proposed development is to create a new enterprise, providing employment for a dog groomer in a residential setting whilst not unduly impacting the wider character of the area, nor resulting in undue impacts on residential amenity.

12. In conclusion, the proposed use of the existing building for a small-scale business use will support the local economy and offer an additional service within the community. The Council supports the protection and enhancement of small and medium sized businesses, both within the existing industrial estates and town centres and those existing enterprises in rural locations, which are important to the local economy. The proposal will offer a small business, within a built-up setting, and supporting the local economy. The proposal will therefore meet the objectives of Policy DM33 of the Rochford Development Plan (2014), Policy ED1 of the Core Strategy (2011, as well as the aims of Paragraph 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) through achieving sustainable development.

Design and Impact on Character

13. The proposal is for the erection of an outbuilding within the rear amenity space of 31 Nelson Road. The site forms part of residential zoning and as such is generally surrounded by residential built form.
14. The proposed works include the erection of a outbuilding to the rear of 31 Nelson Road, this building is to be used as a dog grooming business. The outbuilding is to be set within the recess space of the 'L' shaped host dwelling. The building will have a timber appearance externally, with windows in each elevation as well as glazed double doors for access. These materials are consistent with a domestic outbuilding and allow for the building to be clearly subordinate to the host dwelling and can be clearly seen as an ancillary outbuilding.
15. The proposal overall is considered to positively contribute to the existing dwelling by way of external finishes and is of an appropriate, scale, mass and design. The building is not considered to be a detrimental impact on the character of the application site or the surrounding area and therefore the proposal is considered appropriate.

Impact on Residential Amenity

16. Paragraph 135 (f) of the NPPF seeks to create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. This is reflected in Policy DM1, which seeks to ensure that new developments avoid overlooking, ensuring privacy and promoting visual amenity, and create a positive relationship with existing and nearby buildings.
17. The proposed works are to comprise a single storey outbuilding within the rear amenity space of 31 Nelson Road. The building is to be approximately 3.7m x 2.4m and have a shallow pitched roof with an overall height of around 2.4m. The building by virtue of its siting, modest scale and location is considered unlikely to result in any undue residential amenity impacts. The site is bordered by both hard and soft landscaping which will help soften the view of the building and given the buildings relationship with the host dwelling it is considered unlikely that the proposed outbuilding will result in undue impacts on amenity through outlook, overlooking or overshadowing.
18. Having regard to the above, the proposed development is considered low key given one groom and though operating each day, the hours are considered reasonable and not considered significantly detrimental to the amenity that neighbouring dwellings can reasonably expect to enjoy. As such, it is considered to accord with Policy DM1 of the Development Management Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Highway Safety

19. The site is indicated to be in an area of low connectivity as set out within the Essex Parking Standards (2024). The proposal therefore is to include parking for users of the grooming services, on site, off the public highway. The proposal has indicated five spaces sufficient for both the occupiers of the dwelling (three spaces) and the proposed end use (two spaces). These spaces have been considered by Essex County Council as the highways authority and are deemed acceptable. It has been assessed that the development is acceptable from a highway's perspective.

Biodiversity Net Gain

20. The proposed development is considered to represent de-minimis development given that the proposed development is under 25 square metres. As such no biodiversity net gain is required by this development.

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes a decision. The duty requires us to have regard to the need:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- To foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnerships, and pregnancy/maternity.

Taking account of the nature of the proposed development and representations received, it is considered that the proposed development would not result in any impacts (either positive or negative) on protected groups as defined under the Equality Act 2010.

CONCLUSION

21. The proposed private business, which is to be inside a proposed domestic scaled outbuilding, is not considered to likely to cause significant demonstrable harm to any development plan interests, other material considerations, to the character and appearance of the area, to the street scene or residential amenity such as to justify refusing the

application; nor to surrounding occupiers in neighbouring streets. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the aims of Policy DM33 of the Rochford Development Plan (2014), Policy ED1 of the Core Strategy (2011, as well as the aims of Paragraph 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024). The recommendation is therefore to approve development.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS (summary of responses):

Ashingdon Parish Council: No response received.

Neighbour representations: No Responses Received.

Relevant Development Plan Policies:

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (as amended).

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework
Core Strategy Adopted Version (December 2011) - CP1, T1, T8.

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework
Development Management Plan (December 2014) – DM27, DM30, DM33.

Essex Planning Officers Association Parking Guidance Part1: Parking
Standards Design and Good Practice (September 2024) (Adopted 16th
January 2025).

The Essex Design Guide (2018)

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Conditions:

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: Required to be imposed pursuant to 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 approved shall be carried out in total accordance with the approved drawings labelled.

- SC327 P4
- SC327 P3
- SC327 P2 Rev. A
- SC327 P1 Rev. A

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to specify the plans to which the permission/consent relates.

- 3) The hereby approved dog grooming services to be provided within the proposed outbuilding shall only operate between the hours of 09:00 – 20:00 Monday – Friday and between the hours of 09:00 – 15:00 on Saturday, Sundays and Bank Holidays.

REASON: To enable the Local Planning Authority to retain adequate control over such hours in the interest of the character and amenity of the area.

The local Ward Members for the above application are Cllr. M. R. Carter, Cllr. Mrs. D. L. Belton and Cllr. R. P. Constable.

Application No :	25/00685/FUL Zoning: Unallocated
Case Officer(s)	Richard Kilbourne and Mike Stranks
Parish :	Hawkwell Parish Council
Ward :	Hawkwell East
Location :	57 Lascelles Gardens Rochford Essex
Proposal :	Proposed single storey rear extension to provide three additional clinical rooms and move two parking spaces to the front.

SITE AND PROPOSAL

1. The application site comprises a single-storey detached building currently in use as a doctor's surgery, known as 'Ashingdon Medical Centre'. The building is of traditional construction, featuring facing brickwork elevations (there is an outrigger projecting from the front elevation which is rendered) under a concrete interlocking tiled roof, consistent with the established architectural character of the surrounding residential area.
2. A vehicular driveway runs along the western flank elevation of the building, providing access to a rear hardstanding area that serves as the main car parking facility for the surgery. This arrangement enables off-street parking provision and helps reduce the potential for congestion along the adjoining highway. The rear parking area is visually enclosed and screened from neighbouring properties through established boundary treatments, comprising a combination of 1.8m high close-boarded timber fencing and a 600mm high brick wall with timber panels set between brick piers, offering an appropriate level of privacy and visual containment.
3. The application site is bounded on both sides and to the rear by residential properties, all of which form part of a well-established

suburban context characterised predominantly by detached and semi-detached dwellings of similar scale. The surgery, whilst non-residential in use, is domestic in appearance and sits comfortably within this setting without detracting from the prevailing residential character of the area.

4. The property is located wholly within the residential envelope of Rochford, where development is generally considered acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with relevant design, amenity, and transport policies. The site's location within the settlement boundary supports its continued use for community-serving purposes, such as a medical centre, given its accessibility to the surrounding residential population.
5. The proposal is for a single-storey rear extension to provide three additional clinical rooms and move two parking spaces to the front curtilage.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

6. Application No. 89/00494/FUL – Adj. 51 Lascelles Gardens Rochford Doctors Surgery – Approved - 04.09.1989.
7. Application No. 90/00286/FUL - Doctors Surgery Adj. 51 Lascelles Gardens Rochford – Approved - 30.05.1990.
8. Application No. 15/00515/FUL - Extend Existing Front Porch – Refused - 10.09.2015.
9. Application No. 15/00708/FUL - Extend Existing Front Porch – Approved - 18.11.2015.

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

10. The proposed development must be assessed against relevant planning policy and with regard to any other material planning considerations. In determining this application regard must be had to section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
11. The relevant parts of the adopted Development Plan are the Rochford District Core Strategy (2011), the Allocations Plan (2014) and the Development Management Plan (2014).

Background Information

12. The original description of development stated: *“Proposed single-storey rear extension to provide 3 additional surgeries and move x2*

parking spaces to the front.” However, the agent, acting on behalf of the applicant, subsequently requested that this be amended to: *“Proposed single-storey rear extension to provide 3 additional clinical rooms and move x2 parking spaces to the front.”* The agent advised that the amendment was necessary to avoid confusion among local residents, some of whom had expressed concern via a community Facebook page and by contacting the surgery directly. Specifically, there was a misunderstanding that the term “surgeries” referred to rooms used for surgical procedures, rather than standard consultation rooms. To clarify the nature of the proposed use and eliminate ambiguity, the description of development was updated accordingly.

Principal of Development

13. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), revised in December 2024 and amended in February 2025, outlines the Government’s planning policies for England and the means by which they should be applied. The most recent updates place an increased emphasis on achieving high-quality design, not only at the level of individual sites but in terms of shaping the wider character and coherence of places. These changes reflect a broader strategic shift towards ensuring that new development contributes positively to the function, appearance, and sustainability of built environments.
14. Chapter 2 of the NPPF reiterates the planning system’s role in delivering sustainable development, framed around three interdependent objectives: economic, social, and environmental. These are not to be pursued in isolation, but in a balanced and integrated manner that enables net gains in each area. Of particular relevance to this proposal is the social objective, which emphasises the need to support strong, vibrant, and healthy communities by ensuring the delivery of sufficient homes, services, and well-designed, safe, and inclusive places. The NPPF also stresses the need to plan for development that meets the needs of present and future generations, while responding to the challenges of climate change, environmental degradation, and social inequality.
15. Chapter 12, titled *“Achieving Well-Designed Places”*, states that the creation of high-quality, beautiful, and sustainable buildings and places is a fundamental goal of the planning process. Good design is not merely aesthetic but is a core aspect of sustainable development, with the potential to create better environments for living, working, and social interaction. The NPPF encourages development that is visually attractive, functional, and sympathetic to local character, while also supporting innovation and change where appropriate.

16. At the local level, the proposal is assessed against Policy DM1 of the Council's Development Management Plan, which requires that new development promotes the distinct character of the locality, positively contributes to the natural and built environment and respects the amenity of nearby occupiers. It also states that whilst originality and innovation are encouraged, development should maintain a positive relationship with its context, including nearby buildings and spaces. Policy CP1 to the Council's Core Strategy further supports these objectives, stating that development should enhance local identity by responding to local needs and drawing upon contextual opportunities, thereby reinforcing a strong sense of place.
17. The application site is located wholly within the settlement boundary of Rochford, as confirmed by the Council's GIS mapping data. Development within this designated area is, in principle, supported by both national and local policy, subject to compliance with detailed planning considerations. The site is currently in use as a doctor's surgery, situated within a primarily residential area comprising a mix of single and two-storey dwellings that feature a range of extensions. Given its location and established use, the proposal for a rear extension to enhance clinical service provision is considered acceptable in principle, subject to an assessment of its impact in design, amenity, and operational terms.
18. The proposal seeks full planning permission for a single-storey rear extension, measuring approximately 10.3m in length, 5.4m in width, and 3m in height. The extension will be constructed with a flat roof and will provide an internal floorspace of approximately 54m². It will be sited to the southern (rear) elevation of the existing building and will be constructed primarily on existing hardstanding, thereby minimising any impact on green infrastructure or private amenity space. The extension will maintain a setback of approximately 1m from both the eastern boundary (shared with No. 51 Lascelles Gardens) and the southern boundary (shared with No. 72 Rectory Avenue), ensuring adequate separation from adjacent properties.
19. Internally, the extension will contain three consultation rooms (Rooms 6, 7, and 8), which will be accessed via a corridor. The submitted plans show that minor internal reconfiguration of the existing building will be required, including the reduction in size of one existing clinical room, to accommodate the corridor connection to the new extension. Room 6 and Room 7 are of a similar size, while Room 8, located at the rear end of the extension, is marginally larger. This layout has been designed to support the efficient operation of the clinical facility, while providing improved spatial flexibility.

20. From a design perspective, the extension is of a modest and functional form, clearly subservient to the host building. The use of a flat roof has been deliberately chosen to limit the visual massing of the structure and reduce its prominence when viewed from neighbouring properties. The proposed materials - facing brickwork to match the existing building and white uPVC glazing units - are consistent with the host property and surrounding development, ensuring visual integration. Rainwater goods, soffits, and fascias will also match the existing features, contributing to a cohesive and unified appearance.
21. While the extension has a utilitarian aesthetic, it would be located to the rear of the site, where it will be screened from public vantage points. As such, there will be no significant impact on the streetscene or the visual character of the wider area. In this regard, the proposal aligns with both national and local design objectives, which prioritise developments that are sympathetic to their context and proportionate in scale.
22. With regard to residential amenity (which will be discussed in further detail below), the proposal has been carefully assessed in relation to adjacent properties, particularly No. 51 Lascelles Gardens to the east and No. 72 Rectory Avenue to the south. The single-storey scale of the extension, its flat roof, and the setback from boundaries all help to minimise any potential for overlooking, overbearing impact, or loss of daylight. Two small windows are proposed on the eastern flank elevation, serving Rooms 6 and 7. These openings are modest in scale and are not considered to result in any material loss of privacy to adjoining occupiers. The western elevation will contain two additional windows and a personnel door; one window serves Room 8, and the other lights the corridor. The door provides a secondary means of access and emergency egress, located discreetly within the rear curtilage.
23. Overall, the development is considered to have a neutral impact on neighbouring amenity, with sufficient separation distances and design mitigation to avoid any demonstrable harm. The proposed works are in accordance with Policy DM1, which requires development to respect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.
24. The proposed use of matching materials, including brickwork and roof finishes, is appropriate and sympathetic to the host property. A planning condition is recommended to ensure that external finishes match the existing building to secure a high-quality and consistent appearance. This will help maintain visual integrity and ensure compliance with both Policy CP1 and the NPPF's expectations for design excellence.

25. In conclusion, the proposed extension is acceptable in principle and has been designed to be subordinate, contextually appropriate, and operationally functional. It will provide enhanced clinical facilities within an existing settlement area, without adverse impact on neighbouring amenity or the character of the locality. The proposal accords with the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, and is compliant with Policies DM1 and CP1 of the Local Plan. The development represents a sustainable and appropriately designed addition.

Impact on Residential Amenity

26. Paragraph 135 (f) of the framework seeks to create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and wellbeing, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. This is reflected in the Council's Policy DM1, which seeks to ensure that new developments avoid overlooking, ensuring privacy and promoting visual amenity, and create a positive relationship with existing and nearby buildings. Policy DM3 also requires an assessment of the proposal's impact on residential amenity.
27. Amenity is defined as a set of conditions that one ought reasonably to expect to enjoy on an everyday basis. When considering any development subject of a planning application a Local Planning Authority must give due regard to any significant and demonstrable impacts which would arise as a consequence of the implementation of a development proposal. This impact can be in terms of overlooking, loss of light or creating a degree of overbearing enclosure (often referred to as the tunnelling effect) affecting the amenity of adjacent properties.
28. The proposal involves the construction of a single-storey rear extension to the host property. The potential impact on neighbouring residential amenity has been fully considered in accordance with the relevant local planning policies and the NPPF which require developments to secure a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers.
29. To the south, the extension will be situated approximately 1m from the shared boundary with No. 72 Rectory Avenue, a semi-detached residential property. This neighbouring dwelling is slightly set forward within its plot compared to the application site. The shared boundary is delineated by a brick wall topped by close boarded timber fencing interspaced with brick piers which measures approximately 1.8m high, offering a degree of visual screening. There is a separation distance of around 7m between the rear elevation of the proposed extension and the flank wall of No. 72. Crucially, there are no windows proposed in the rear elevation of the proposed extension that would face towards No. 72, thereby avoiding any potential for overlooking or loss of privacy. Owing to

the single-storey scale, flat-roofed design, and intervening boundary treatment, the extension is not considered to result in any unacceptable impacts in terms of loss of daylight, overshadowing, or overbearing presence to this neighbouring property.

30. To the east lies No. 51 Lascelles Gardens, a relatively large detached 1.5 storey property within a generous plot. The proposed extension would be set back 1m from the shared boundary, which is similarly marked by a 1.8m high fence. The case officer observed several extensive outbuildings within the rear garden of No. 51, including some located immediately adjacent to the boundary with the application site. These structures are considered to provide additional screening, which helps to mitigate the visual impact of the proposed extension. A distance of approximately 6m is maintained between the proposed extension and the flank wall of No. 51. As previously stated, the extension includes two windows on its eastern flank to serve clinic rooms. However, due to the intervening fence and single-storey nature of the development, these windows are not considered to give rise to any harmful overlooking or loss of privacy. Furthermore, given the height, design, and separation distance, the proposal is not expected to cause undue overshadowing or appear overbearing when viewed from No. 51.
31. To the immediate west of the extension is an existing car park which serves the doctor's surgery. This car park is to be retained. Beyond it is No. 63 Lascelles Gardens, a detached dwelling situated prominently on the corner of Lascelles Gardens and Rectory Avenue. The proposed extension's flank elevation, which contains two windows and a personnel door, is set approximately 14m from the shared boundary with No. 63. This boundary is also enclosed by a brick wall topped with a close boarded timber fence measuring roughly 1.8m high. Given the substantial separation distance, the intervening car park, and the modest height and form of the proposal, it is not considered that the development would give rise to any unacceptable impacts on the amenity of No. 63 in terms of overlooking, overshadowing, or loss of outlook.
32. The wider area is predominantly residential in character, but no other dwellings are situated in such close proximity to the proposed extension that they would be materially affected. Overall, the proposal has been designed with due regard to the character and constraints of the site, and its relationship with neighbouring properties. The single-storey nature, flat roof profile, modest footprint, and generous separation distances ensure that the extension would not result in demonstrable harm to the living conditions of any adjacent occupiers.
33. In conclusion, the development is not considered to give rise to any significant adverse impacts upon residential amenity. The relationship with surrounding properties is acceptable, and the

proposal complies with relevant development plan policies and the overarching aims of the NPPF, which seek to ensure that new development is well designed and does not result in unacceptable harm to the amenities of nearby occupiers.

Highways considerations

34. Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Council's Development Management Plan (DMP) require all development proposals to make appropriate provision for car parking, taking into account the nature and intensity of the development, the characteristics of the site, and its accessibility by sustainable modes of transport. Policy DM30 reinforces the importance of creating and maintaining an inclusive and accessible environment, requiring proposals to meet the Council's adopted parking standards and to ensure that new development does not prejudice highway safety or lead to excessive on-street parking.
35. At national level, paragraph 116 of the NPPF is a material consideration, stating that development should only be refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or if the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. This establishes a high evidential threshold for refusal, requiring clear and demonstrable evidence of significant harm to the highway network.
36. The application site forms part of an established doctor's surgery within the built-up area of Rochford, a sustainable settlement served by public transport, pedestrian routes, and cycle infrastructure. The surrounding area is predominantly residential and benefits from moderate accessibility to local services. The proposal seeks to construct a single-storey outrigger extension to the rear of the existing surgery to provide additional consultation and treatment space. The extension would be built over an existing area of hardstanding currently used for vehicle parking (2 parking spaces). The submitted plans (reference 951 Revision A) indicate that two new parking spaces would be created to the front of the property, accessed via a new dropped kerb, resulting in no net loss of car parking provision across the site.
37. The existing practice has five consulting rooms with 13 full time equivalent staff. No details have been provided for the proposed staff increase or if there would be no change.
38. The original approval for the medical centre was granted in 1989 and 1990. The existing car park provides 6 spaces to the rear of the building plus some ad – hoc provision for about four or more vehicles depending upon size, possible alongside the building within the access. It is likely that the original permission was assessed against different car parking standards.

39. The proposal would relocate the two spaces displaced as a result of the proposed extension to the site frontage. No change is therefore proposed as a result of the proposed increase in consulting rooms.
40. The latest parking standards (2024) require 0.75 spaces per full time member of staff and two spaces per consulting room. Full compliance for the resulting medical centre as would be extended with the latest standards (which officers view would not be justified) would require 16 spaces for the consulting rooms and 9.75 spaces (rounded up to 10) for the full time equivalent staff. A total of 26 spaces would therefore achieve full compliance for the resulting medical centre against the latest and current standards. Some 10 spaces (less than half of that required if this was for a new centre) are provided and would be retained across the site.
41. The latest parking standards show the site to be in a location considered to have moderate connectivity with very limited public transport coverage, though the latest parking standards make no distinction in the level of connectivity for the standard required for medical centres.
42. The existing provision (10 spaces) has to be treated as acceptable for the existing medical centre. Based on the three additional consulting rooms and the absence in the application of any increase in staff, compliance with the latest parking standards would require an additional 6 spaces. More might be required for any increase in full time equivalent staff.
43. It is recognised that the extension will enable the practice to accommodate a greater number of patients and as such, a modest increase in traffic generation is anticipated. Whilst the overall scale of the extension would be limited, there would nevertheless be a corresponding rise in vehicular movements expected to be proportionate to the increased number of consulting rooms. Patient visits to GP surgeries are generally short in duration (10 – 20 minutes) and spread throughout the day, which helps to prevent traffic congestion during peak hours. The site's location in the heart of the residential area also encourages travel by walking, cycling, and public transport, reducing reliance on private vehicles, but this is dependant upon the fitness of the patient to be able to walk or use transport alternatives. District officers are mindful of the absence of objection from the highway authority. However, the level of parking provision is demonstrably inadequate as evidenced from the representations received and on the basis of the latest car parking standards. On this basis, officers consider that the increase in parking pressure upon and adjoining streets arising from the proposed three additional consulting rooms would make an already poor situation worse resulting in increased parking pressure upon

the streets in the vicinity of the junction of Rectory Avenue with Lascelles Gardens close to the site.

44. Representations received from local residents raise concerns about existing parking pressures, double parking, speeding, and vehicles obstructing the highway, particularly in the vicinity of nearby junctions. These concerns are acknowledged and have been carefully considered. However, such matters also relate to driver behaviour and enforcement, which fall outside the remit of the planning system and are instead managed through highway and police enforcement powers. From a planning perspective, the principal consideration is whether the additional traffic generated by the proposal would give rise to a severe cumulative impact on the local road network or compromise road safety. In this instance, anecdotal evidence supported by the failing against current parking standards demonstrates that the development would exacerbate existing issues.
45. The Council have consulted Essex County Council Highways Authority, who confirm that the proposal is acceptable from a highway and transportation perspective. Their formal response stated that the development will provide additional surgery space to an established facility which is accessible by sustainable transport, including public transport, walking, and cycling. The additional surgery space will occupy part of the rear car park, and the provision of two replacement parking spaces will require a new vehicle access to the front of the site. The applicant has indicated that they will apply directly to Essex Highways for the new dropped kerb vehicle access. The Highway Authority therefore raised no objection to the proposal, subject to conditions relating to surfacing materials, provision and retention of two off-street parking spaces, cycle parking, and arrangements for the storage of materials clear of the highway during construction.
46. The Highway Authority's advice confirms that whilst the proposal will result in some additional traffic movements due to increased patient capacity, these are not of a magnitude that would create congestion or highway safety concerns. District officers however consider that the relocation of parking to the front of the site would however fall short of compliance with the Council's adopted parking standards for the development proposed with no provision at all for the additional capacity arising from the three new consulting rooms.
47. Whilst the proposal would deliver clear public benefits by enhancing the capacity and functionality of an existing medical facility that serves the local community, the increased floor area will allow the practice to accommodate more patients, improve access to healthcare, and support the delivery of essential medical services at a local level. Despite these important social and community benefits that align with the NPPF's objectives of supporting strong,

healthy, and inclusive communities carrying substantial weight in the overall planning balance, the significant shortfall in parking space provision is likely in district officers view , to make more acute on street parking pressure and impact upon the nearby junction of Rectory Avenue and Lascelles gardens, increasing the risk and likelihood of adverse highway safety conditions for the free flow of traffic.

Drainage

48. Development on sites such as this can generally reduce the permeability of at least part of the site and changes the site's response to rainfall. Advice advocated within the NPPF states that in order to satisfactorily manage flood risk in new developments, appropriate surface water drainage arrangements are required. The guidance also states that surface water arising from a developed site should, as far as possible, be managed in a sustainable manner to mimic the surface water flows arising from the site prior to the proposed development. Therefore, it is considered reasonable to attach a condition to the Decision Notice requiring the submission of a satisfactory drainage scheme in order to ensure that any surface water runoff from the site is sufficiently discharged.

Flooding

49. According to the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Map the application site is located entirely in Flood Zone 1, where there is the lowest probability of flooding from rivers and the sea and to where development should be directed. As such, the development is compatible with the advice advocated within the NPPF.

Ecology

50. Paragraph 180 of the NPPF indicates the importance of avoiding impacts on protected species and their habitat. Where impact is considered to occur, appropriate mitigation to offset the identified harm is required. The council's Local Development Framework Development Management Plan at Policy DM27, requires consideration of the impact of development on the natural landscape including protected habitat and species. National planning policy also requires the planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity, providing net gains in biodiversity where possible. In addition to the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, proposals for development should have regard to Local Biodiversity Action Plans, including those produced at District and County level.

51. Following the production of Publicly Available Specification (PAS 2010) by the British Standard Institute (BSI), local governments now have clear guidelines by which to take action to ensure that they help halt the loss of biodiversity and contribute to sustainable development.
52. Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006) places a duty on public authorities to have regard for the purpose of conserving biodiversity. PAS 2010 aims to reduce the varied applications of this obligation, ensuring that all parties have a clearer understanding of information required at the planning stage. Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) identifies habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. There are 56 habitats and 943 Species of Principal Importance in England (SPIE), and most of the UK's protected species are listed under Section 41. Whilst the possible presence of a protected species is accompanied by legal obligations and will remain the first consideration of planning departments, the total biodiversity value of a site must now be considered.
53. The case officer acknowledges that a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has not been submitted in support of the application. Ordinarily, the absence of such an assessment would be a concern where there is potential for harm to ecological receptors. However, in this instance, the site comprises entirely of existing hardstanding with no evidence of vegetative cover, natural habitats, or features likely to support protected species or priority habitats.
54. Given the highly urbanised and previously developed nature of the site, the likelihood of the proposal resulting in any significant adverse impacts on biodiversity is considered negligible. As such, the absence of a PEA is not considered to undermine the assessment of ecological impact in this case.
55. In line with the Council's Policy DM27, which seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity through development proposals, and chapter 15 "*Conserving and enhancing the natural environment*" of the NPPF, which require planning decisions to minimise impacts on biodiversity, the proposal is considered compliant.

Trees

56. Policy DM25 of the Rochford District Council Development Management Plan (2014) provides a clear framework for the protection and enhancement of trees and woodlands, with particular emphasis on safeguarding Ancient Woodland. The policy states that development proposals resulting in the loss, deterioration, or fragmentation of tree cover or woodland—either directly or

indirectly—will only be supported where it can be robustly demonstrated that the benefits and necessity of the development clearly outweigh the ecological, landscape, and amenity value of the existing features. Furthermore, appropriate mitigation measures must be secured to reinstate the nature conservation value of the affected areas. Where such loss is unavoidable, compensatory provision must be made through the replacement of trees or woodland of equivalent ecological or amenity value and/or area.

57. There are no trees on the subject site which would be affected by the proposed development and as such the proposal complies with Policy DM25.

Biodiversity Net Gain

58. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a way of creating and improving biodiversity by requiring development to have a positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity. A minimum 10 percent BNG is now mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) subject to some exceptions.
59. The applicant has indicated that they consider that the development proposed would not be subject to the statutory biodiversity net gain requirement because one of the exemptions would apply. Following a site visit and assessment of on-site habitat and consideration of the nature of the development proposed officers agree that the proposal would be exempt from the statutory biodiversity gain condition because the development meets one of the exemption criteria, i.e., relating to custom/self-build development or de-minimis development or because the development is retrospective. The applicant has not therefore been required to provide any BNG information.
60. The applicant has confirmed that the proposal qualifies for the de minimis exemption under the relevant biodiversity net gain (BNG) guidance. Specifically, the development does not affect any priority habitat, and the area of on-site habitat impacted is less than 25m² - well below the threshold set out for exemption (e.g. 5m x 5m). Additionally, the development does not impact any linear habitat, such as hedgerows or watercourses. Supporting evidence has been provided by the applicant demonstrating that the area affected by the proposed extension comprises a sealed, hard-surfaced area, and therefore does not constitute habitat of ecological value. On this basis, the proposal meets the criteria for a de minimis exemption and is not subject to the full biodiversity net gain requirements.
61. As the proposal is for development to which the statutory biodiversity gain condition would not apply, a planning informative to advise any future developer that they would not have to discharge

the statutory gain condition prior to the commencement of development is recommended.

Other Matters

62. Other concerns raised are that if the application is approved, that during the construction phase there will be significant disruption due to builder's vans, equipment, noise, access and mess. Again, the case officer notes the concerns of the objectors and appreciates that it is not uncommon for such problems to occur during the construction phase although these tend to be for a limited period of time and are therefore not considered sufficient grounds for refusal of a planning application. Furthermore, if vehicles are causing an obstruction, for example blocking people's drives, this is a matter which can be dealt with by the Police who have the appropriate legislation and powers to free the access, the planning system is not here to duplicate other legislation.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

63. The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes a decision. The duty requires us to have regard to the need:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- To foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

64. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnerships, and pregnancy/maternity.

65. Taking account of the nature of the proposed development and representations received, it is considered that the proposed development would not result in any impacts (either positive or negative) on protected groups as defined under the Equality Act 2010.

CONCLUSION

66. Refuse.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS (summary of responses):

Hawkwell Parish Council: No objection to this application.

Essex County Council Highways Authority: The proposal will provide additional surgery space to the established facility which is accessible by sustainable transport including public transport, walking and cycling. The additional surgery space will be in a section of the car park to the rear and provision of two replacement parking spaces will require a new vehicle access to the front of the site. The applicant has indicated that they will apply directly to Essex Highways for the new dropped kerb vehicle access. Therefore, from a highway and transportation perspective the impact of the proposal is acceptable to the Highway Authority. No objection subject to the imposition of conditions relating to 2No. off road car parking spaces to be provided, cycle parking, reception and storage of building materials, surfacing materials and informatives.

Cadent Gas: No objection subject to imposition of standard informative.

5 letters of representation have been received raising the following points:

- I would request that the outdoor set is changed, so as not shine into my property.
- Noise and disturbance during the construction works.
- The area is already congested, and people are already parking badly. This proposal will exacerbate the situation without additional parking
- Appropriate parking restrictions need to be put in place if this is to happen and be policed.
- The loss of car parking spaces in the surgery car park will make the situation worse.
- The proposed extension will decrease on site parking and therefore increase parking in Lascelles Gardens which is an adopted highway.
- As the surgery is near a road junction and parking already difficult with very limited on site parking, this will increase on street parking making pedestrian access more dangerous.

Relevant Development Plan Policies:

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024 revised in February 2025)

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy Adopted Version (December 2011) – policy CP1.

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Development Management Plan (December 2014) – policies DM1, DM3, DM8, DM25, DM27, DM30.

Essex Planning Officers Association Parking Guidance Part1: Parking Standards Design and Good Practice (September 2024) (Adopted 16th January 2025)

The Essex Design Guide (2018)

Natural England Standing Advice

RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE

Reasons:

1. The proposal would fail to provide any significant uplift in off street parking provision considered necessary for the development proposed. The proposal would provide for three additional consulting rooms requiring the provision of 6 additional off street parking spaces for the potential increased capacity of the medical centre. If allowed, the additional patients attending the centre would be forced to park nearby resulting in increased parking pressure on neighbouring streets adjoining the medical centre and in the vicinity of the junction between Rectory Avenue and Lascelles Gardens and giving rise to congestion and traffic conflict with vehicles moving on the highway having to overtake and pass extensive lengths of parked vehicles and having to move into opposite flows of oncoming traffic and movements associated with the nearby junction to the detriment of highway safety and the free flow of traffic.

The local Ward Members for the above application are Cllr. Mike Webb, Cllr. Mrs. D. P. Squires-Coleman and Cllr. E. O. Mason.

Application No :	25/00689/FUL Zoning : Industrial
Case Officer	Mr John Harrison
Parish :	Rochford Parish Council
Ward :	Roche South
Location :	Ambulance Station Aviation Way Rochford
Proposal :	Proposed detached building to provide workshop ancillary to use of the site as an Ambulance Station.

SITE AND PROPOSAL

1. The application relates to the Rochford Ambulance Station which is situated on the Aviation Way Industrial Estate on the east side of the road. To the north is Harrier House which is occupied by a printing and packaging company and to the south a self-storage yard with containers.
2. The site is roughly rectangular with a frontage of 40 metres and an average depth of approximately 105 metres. The buildings are on the northern side of the site with the remainder used for vehicle parking. The front part of the building comprises a two-storey brick and render

office, mess, etc. building approx. 11m in height and behind that a single-storey part used for parking and maintenance.

3. The proposal is to erect a further building for maintenance able to accommodate three ambulances. It would be approximately 10 metres x 15 metres and have a pitched roof 7m in height overall. The roof ridge would not be straight, however, as there would be slight curvature over the three bays. It would have steel cladding walls and a coated polyester fabric roof. It would be located roughly centrally on the rear boundary with the three roller shutter doors or the three bays facing the front of the site.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4. Application No. 84/00816/FUL – Plot 12 Aviation Way Rochford Essex Warehouse with Offices Trade Toilets and Canteen Facilities – Approved – 01.03.1985.
5. Application No. 86/00129/ADV – Illuminated Box Fascia Sign and Illuminated Gable Sign – Approved - 25.03.1986.
6. Application No. 86/00569/COU – Plot 12 Aviation Way Rochford Change use of First Floor from Storage to Office Use – Approved – 26.09.1986.
7. Application No. 04/00702/ADV - Display Non-Illuminated Lettering and Signage to Sales Office and Warehouse and 2 x Non Illuminated Free Standing Signs – Approved - 29.09.2004.
8. Application No. 12/00275/COU - Proposed Change of Use of Ground Floor From Retail Warehouse (A1) To Use For Car Sales, Servicing And M.O.T Testing (Sui Generis Use) – Approved - 19.07.2012.
9. Application No. 15/00758/FUL - External Alterations Providing Additional Windows and Doors, And an External Wash Facility. Change of Use to an Ambulance Facility – Approved - 16.12.2015.
10. Application No. 16/00287/FUL - External Alterations Providing a Bulk Fuel Store and Wash Bay Facility – Approved - 22.06.2016.
11. Application No. 16/00363/ADV - Proposed Free-Standing Non-Illuminated Sign – Approved - 17.06.2016.
12. Application No. 18/00881/FUL - Proposed additional roller shutter and replacement of an external door with a window. New mezzanine floor to provide staff rest room, kitchenette and parts store – Approved - 14.11.2018.

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

13. The proposed development must be assessed against relevant planning policy and with regard to any other material planning considerations. In determining this application regard must be had to section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
14. The relevant parts of the adopted Development Plan are the Rochford District Core Strategy (2011), the Allocations Plan (2014) the London Southend Airport Joint Area Action Plan (2014) and the Development Management Plan (2014).

Impact on Character

15. The proposed building is of a relatively utilitarian design using appropriate materials for a commercial building. This is an industrial estate where such buildings are commonplace and therefore this is acceptable. It should also be noted that the building would be set back well within the site so it will not in any event be readily noticeable. In appearance terms, it is considered to comply with policy CP1 of the Core Strategy and DM1 of the Development Management Plan.

Impact on Neighbours

16. To the east/rear of the site is a factory circulation/loading area and the building beyond that does not have any windows facing the site. When viewed from the premises to the north, the proposed new building would be screened by the existing ambulance station. To the south is the self-storage business and the car park of Saxon Hall, a masonic lodge, conference and function centre. Whilst there may be some noise from the maintenance work, this is an industrial area where noise would be anticipated and in any event similar maintenance work is being carried out in the adjacent existing building. Thus, the proposal would have an acceptable amenity impact against the general background noise including that of airport operations.

Highway Issues

17. The proposal would not result in any significant increase in traffic from the site. Most of the site is taken up by parking for ambulances and staff cars. This building might slightly increase demand for parking, but the site operators would not be likely to allow a development which prejudiced the functional operation of the station.

Airport Operation

18. The Airport have indicated they would object to this development if it were to be taller than adjacent buildings. The proposal would be some 3m – 4m lower and as such, this would not be the case.

Biodiversity Net Gain

19. The entire site is occupied either by building or surfaced vehicle parking. Thus, this proposal is exempt from the biodiversity net gain requirement as no priority habitat would be impacted. The proposal does not raise any other ecological issues.

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

20. The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes a decision. The duty requires us to have regard to the need:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- To foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

21. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnerships, and pregnancy/maternity.

22. It is considered that the proposed development would not impact on one or more protected groups as defined under the Equality Act 2010 and an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed. This indicates that the proposal would/would not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular protected characteristic.

CONCLUSION

23. Clearly a facility that assists the ambulance service is to be welcomed and in this instance there are no significant detrimental impacts from the proposal so approval is recommended.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS (summary of responses):

Rochford Parish Council : No comments received.

Southend Airport: Our calculations show that, the proposed development would conflict with safeguarding criteria unless any planning permission granted is subject to the following conditions:

- The proposed development must be no taller than the surrounding existing infrastructure. If taller, an IFP assessment will be required.

We will therefore need to object to these proposals unless the above mentioned condition is applied to any planning permission.

Neighbour representations: No comments received

Relevant Development Plan Policies:

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (as amended).

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy Adopted Version (December 2011) – Policies CP1, T8.

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Development Management Plan (December 2014) – Policies DM1, DM30.

London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan (2014)- Policy E2.

Essex Planning Officers Association Parking Guidance Part1: Parking Standards Design and Good Practice (September 2024) (Adopted 16th January 2025).

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: Required to be imposed pursuant to 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 shall be carried out in accordance with unnumbered location plan, unnumbered block plan, unnumbered “hall visualisation”, unnumbered proposed site and block plan and drawing number AV1.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to define the scope of the permission.

The local Ward Members for the above application are Cllr. Angelina Marriott, Cllr. M. J. Steptoe and Cllr. A. L. Williams.

Application No :	25/00220/FUL Zoning : MGB and Listed Building
Case Officer	Mr Richard Kilbourne
Parish :	Stambridge Parish Council
Ward :	Roche North And Rural
Location :	Little Stambridge Hall, Little Stambridge Hall Lane, Stambridge.
Proposal :	Renovate/ repair existing grade II listed house, replace ancillary accommodation and construct a swimming pool and change the use of the site from use as a dwellinghouse (Class C3) to use within Use Class C1 (hotel) for use as rental accommodation and a yoga retreat.

SITE AND PROPOSAL

1. The application site consists of a Grade II Listed residential dwelling and ancillary buildings located at the northern end of and to the west of Little Stambridge Hall Lane. The application dwelling is a four-storey dwelling constructed of red facing brick with a predominantly hipped roof.
2. Little Stambridge Hall is a Grade II Listed Building (entry 1112574) first entered onto the register in 1951. Within the immediate curtilage of the application site is a cart lodge and a retaining wall, both are Grade II Listed also with entry numbers 1397034 and 1112575 respectively, both entered onto the register in 1988. It is understood that the Cart Lodge and other ancillary Lodge Buildings do not form part of this application which relates only to Little Stambridge Hall itself.
3. It is understood that Little Stambridge Hall was constructed sometime around the C16th century, however, has been extended and altered throughout its history, with additions added to the dwelling through the C18th and C20th centuries. Notwithstanding, despite these additions, the dwelling retains its historic and traditional form, comprised of a left cross wing, shaft moulded capping, large chimney stacks, and 2:5 windows with vertically sliding sashes.
4. The application site is located entirely within the Metropolitan Green Belt as defined by the Council's adopted Allocations Plan (2014).
5. The application proposes renovations and repairs to the existing building and change of use from residential (Use Class C3) to yoga retreat and temporary accommodation (Use Class C1). The application is submitted in tandem with an application for listed building consent, LPA ref. 25/00221/LBC that was approved on 1st September 2025.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

6. Application No. 25/00221/LBC – Renovate/repair existing grade II listed house, replace ancillary accommodation and construct a swimming pool for use as rental accommodation and a yoga retreat. Approved – 1st September 2025.
7. Application No. 22/00760/DOC - Discharge of condition No. 6 (Submission of Surface Water Drainage Details and Implementation) of application reference 20/01103/FUL.
8. Application No. 22/00651/DOC - Discharge of Condition no. 3 (Submission of External Finishes) Planning Consent Ref. 20/01103/FUL.
9. Application No. 22/00381/NMA - Nonmaterial amendments to planning consent reference 20/01103/FUL. Application Refused 19/09/2023.
10. Application No. 20/01103/FUL - Demolition of existing commercial units and erection of 3 purpose built commercial units with ancillary parking and landscaping. Application Permitted 30/03/2021.
11. Application No. 19/009026/FUL - Demolition of existing commercial units and erection of 3 purpose built commercial units for Use within the B8 (Storage and Distribution) and B1(C) (Light Industrial) Use Classes with ancillary parking and landscaping. Application Refused 09/09/2020.
12. Application No. 18/00953/FUL – Redevelopment of existing commercial warehouses to provide purpose built warehouse units with associated parking. Application Withdrawn.
13. Application No. 18/00673/FUL – Demolition of two sheds and construction of a single storey extension to listed building. Refused 03/12/2018.
14. Application No. 18/00622/LBC – Demolition of two sheds and construction of a single storey extension to listed building. Refused Listed Building Consent 03/12/2018.
15. Application No. 18/00388/FUL – Change of use of existing agricultural buildings to a flexible business use. Application Permitted 27/06/2018.
16. Application No. 18/00195/DOC – Discharge of condition no 3 of planning permission REF: 17/00589/FUL dated 2nd November 2017.
17. Application No. 18/00182/DOC – Discharge of condition no 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 of planning permission REF: 17/00590/LBC dated 2nd November 2017.

18. Application No. 17/00869/DPDP3M – Prior notification for a proposed change of use of an agricultural building to a flexible business use. Prior approval required; Approved 01/11/2017.
19. Application No. 17/00590/LBC – Convert cart lodge to residential accommodation, incorporating alterations to roof to include front and rear pitched roof dormers, roof lights and additional windows and door and internal alterations. Approved 02/11/2017.
20. Application No. 17/00589/FUL – Convert cart lodge to residential accommodation, incorporating alterations to roof to include front and rear pitched roof dormers, roof lights, and additional windows and door. Application Permitted 02/11/2017.
21. Application No. 16/01064/COU - Change of use of redundant farm buildings to commercial uses B1 (Business) B2 (General industry) B8 (Storage or distribution and equestrian uses). Application Permitted 05/01/2017.
22. Application No. 12/00776/FUL – Construction of Grain Store. Application Permitted 06/03/2012.
23. Application No. 11/00625/FUL – Construct Agricultural Building with Solar Panels. Application Permitted 07/02/2012.
24. Application No. 11/00527/DPDP6 – Agricultural Storage Building. Prior Approval Required; Approved 27/09/2011.
25. Application No. 00/0008/LBC – First floor extension over existing single storey extension. Application Refused 15/03/2000.
26. Application No. 00/0007/FUL – First floor extension over existing single storey extension. Application Permitted 15/03/2000.
27. Application No. 95/00291/FUL – Erect Grain Drier and Store. Application Permitted 19/07/1995.
28. Application No. 85/00179/LBC – Single storey side extension. Application Permitted 15/07/1985.
29. Application No. 85/00152/FUL – Single storey side extension. Application Permitted 15/07/1985.
30. Application No. 84/00357/FUL – Erect Barn. Application Permitted 27/07/1984.

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

31. The proposed development must be assessed against relevant planning policy and with regard to any other material planning considerations. In determining this application regard must be had to section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
32. The relevant parts of the adopted Development Plan are the Rochford District Core Strategy (2011), the Allocations Plan (2014) and the Development Management Plan (2014).

Background Information

33. Members will recall that this application was previously published on the Weekly List and recommended for refusal for the following reason:

“The submitted Biodiversity Assessment (ACJ Ecology, March 2025) and Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain – Calculation Tool (March 2025) did not provide sufficient information to enable the Local Planning Authority to assess the biodiversity baseline or proposed biodiversity net gain in accordance with the Environment Act 2021, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and relevant local planning policies.

No photographs, survey dates, or detailed species lists were provided, and the habitat condition assessments were vague and unsupported by evidence. The condition notes focused on potential habitat improvements rather than describing the current state, undermining confidence in the baseline data. Further clarification was also required to justify classifying most of the site as “other neutral grassland” rather than “vegetated garden.”

In addition, the on-site trees were assigned a medium strategic significance without justification. Given the imminent adoption of the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), it was expected that these trees should be recorded as having low strategic significance.

Without adequate baseline evidence, justification for habitat classifications, or a complete Biodiversity Gain Plan containing all required statutory information—including completed metric calculations, pre- and post-development habitat plans, relevant legal agreements, and biodiversity credit evidence—the application failed to demonstrate how it would deliver the mandatory minimum 10% biodiversity net gain. The proposal therefore conflicted with the requirements of the Environment Act 2021, the National Planning Policy Framework, and relevant local development plan policies relating to biodiversity net gain, ecological enhancement, and sustainable development.”

34. Following this, the agent requested in consultation with ward members that the decision be held in abeyance pending the submission of the necessary ecological information. The agent has now provided the additional information which is considered further in this report.

Principle of Development

35. The application site is located entirely within the Metropolitan Green Belt and is also a Grade II Listed Building. Paragraph 153 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024, as amended; henceforth 'the Framework') states that there is a general presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt. Inappropriate development is, by very definition, harmful to the openness of the Green Belt and should be resisted unless there is demonstrable very special circumstances that would outweigh the harm caused to the Green Belt by reason of its inappropriateness.
36. Paragraph 154 of the Framework goes to list certain types of development which should not be considered inappropriate development within the Green Belt. At Paragraph 154(h)(v), the Framework states that material changes of use of land should not be regarded as inappropriate development within the Green Belt, however 154(h)(v) makes clear that this is in connection with activities such as sport and recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds. In respect of the application, it is proposed to change the use of the land from Use Class C3 to Use Class C1. Therefore, the specific change of use in this instance would not meet this criterion and is therefore inappropriate development within the Green Belt which should be resisted unless very special circumstances indicate otherwise.
37. Policy DM12 of the Council's Development Management Plan is supportive of rural diversification on the condition that:
- (i) *the need to ensure that the proposed use would not have an undue impact on the openness of the Green Belt, character of the countryside, nature conservation interests, the historic environment, visual amenity or residential amenity;*
 - (ii) *the need to ensure that the proposed use would not introduce additional activity or traffic movements likely to materially and adversely affect the openness of the Green Belt or character of the countryside, or place unacceptable pressures on the surrounding highway network;*
 - (iii) *the sensitivity of the landscape character area to the proposed development;*
 - (iv) *the impact of the proposal on the agricultural value of the land;*
 - (v) *where rural diversification for employment opportunities is proposed, the area should have good links to the highway network particularly taking account of highway safety; and*

(vi) *where the conversion of nationally or locally listed agricultural and rural buildings is proposed it should:*

*(a) not negatively impact on the quality of the listed structure;
and*

(b) not affect the integrity of the existing structure. A structural engineers report should accompany any application for conversion of a Listed Building. Any development which is permitted should be of a scale, design and siting such that the character of the countryside is not harmed and nature conservation interests are protected.

38. These matters are discussed more generally throughout the report and in application ref. 25/00221/LBC which was submitted in tandem with this application and approved on 1st September 2025. In summary, however, it is considered that Policy DM12 of the Development Management Plan is largely supportive of rural diversification of this kind, subject to impacts on the listed building being considered below.

39. As stated, the application building is a Grade II Listed Building. Paragraph 212 of the Framework states that when taking into account the impact of a development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the conservation of the asset; the greater the significance, the greater the weight should be. This is irrespective of whether the harm is substantial, less than substantial, or a total loss.

40. Paragraphs 214 and 215 of the Framework go on to state that any harm to a designated heritage asset (whether this is substantial, less than substantial, or a total loss) should require clear and convincing justification and should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

41. It is understood from the submitted heritage statement (which is discussed further below, and also in application ref. 25/00221/LBC) and the planning statement that the existing structure is compromised and is no longer habitable as a residential dwelling in its current form. Several parts of the building are being supported by scaffolding, and there is no central heating. This has been supported by a structural report carried out by a qualified Structural Engineer, and the Council does not dispute that the building is in a poor condition; this condition in itself is harmful to the significance of the listed building.

42. Having regard to the above, it is acknowledged that the proposal seeks to repair and renovate the existing building and bring it back into use – albeit it is acknowledged that this would not be a residential use. These works would safeguard the future of the listed building – a designated heritage asset – and ensure that it can be enjoyed for years to come.

The Framework makes clear that any justification for approving inappropriate development within the Green Belt should be clear and convincing. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that when considering whether to grant permission for a development, a Local Planning Authority should have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it may possess. In this instance, it is considered that the safeguarding of a designated heritage asset is a significant material consideration which amounts to very special circumstances which would outweigh the harm that the development would cause to the openness of the Green Belt (discussed below). As such, there is no in-principle objection to the proposed Change of Use.

43. In regard to the proposal's impact on the openness of the Green Belt, it is acknowledged that this has both spatial and visual characteristics. The application site is such that it is largely screened by vegetation to the southern and northeastern application site boundaries. Furthermore, most of the development would be restorative in nature and would therefore not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing situation. In regard to the demolition and reconstruction of the ancillary buildings, it is acknowledged that these would be constructed behind the retained wall and would therefore, the combination of this wall and the vegetation would provide heavy screening which would reduce visual intrusion. Furthermore, the application submission indicates that overall, there would be a net reduction in built footprint across the application site. Having regard to this, it is not considered in this instance that the proposal would be significantly harmful to the openness of the Green Belt. In any case, the combination of the retaining wall and the vegetation to the application site boundaries is such that the developments are unlikely to be seen outside of the curtilage of the existing dwelling.
44. It is acknowledged in this instance that the Change of Use would result in the loss of a residential dwelling. Rochford District Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites as required by the Framework. Consequently, the loss of a dwelling is a significant material consideration which must be weighed against the benefits of the proposal.
45. As discussed previously, the existing dwelling is in poor condition and the proposal would provide much needed repairs and renovations to secure the future of the building – a Grade II Listed Building. This is considered significant and, in this instance, outweighs the harm caused by the loss of a singular residential dwelling. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that the loss would amount to 1 No. dwelling only and is therefore unlikely to have a significant impact on the Council's 5-year housing land supply.

46. The Rochford District Culture and Visitor Economy Strategy aims to grow and expand the visitor economy in the wider district in a bid to grow the local economy through making the district a more attractive place to visit and diversifying the offerings. Priority 4 of the Strategy aims to increase the range and quality of accommodation offerings throughout the district to maximise economic benefit.
47. Section 6 of the Framework emphasises that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand, and adapt. Paragraph 85 of the Framework states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity.
48. The proposed development has the potential to provide increased job opportunities and also to attract visitors to the district. This would provide a boost to the local economy and therefore aligns with both the aims of the Framework and the district's Culture and Visitor Economy Strategy. It is further acknowledged that the district has a short supply of serviced accommodation. The proposal would directly benefit the district in this regard.

Design and Appearance

49. Policy DM1 of the Council's adopted Development Management Plan requires that proposals promote visual amenity and have a positive relationship with nearby buildings and are of a scale and form appropriate to the locality. The policy also notes that specific points of consideration must be addressed through design and layout, including impact on the historic environment including Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings, archaeological sites, and the wider historic landscape.
50. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant permission for a development which impacts a listed building, or its setting, a Local Planning Authority should have specific regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it may possess.
51. Little Stambridge Hall (and the associated retaining wall) which are the subject of this application are, as discussed, Grade II Listed Buildings with special architectural and historic character which date back to the C16th century; as such, the main consideration in the determination of this application is whether the proposed change of use and extensions/alterations would preserve the character and appearance of the building(s) and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

52. As discussed earlier, this application was submitted in tandem with an application for listed building consent (LPA ref. 25/00221/LBC) that was approved on 1st September 2025. The officer report for that application discusses the heritage impacts of the proposed development in more detail, whilst this report gives a general overview of the impacts of the Change of Use and the alterations.
53. Included within the proposed works are several repairs to the internal structure of the building, including roof and floor investigations, repointing, and basement tanking. It is proposed to fully re-wire the building to bring it to modern standards, install a heat pump, repairs to drainage, fire safety improvements including the installation of a sprinkler system, and the replacement of timber floors and kitchen.
54. Externally, it is proposed to repair the roof and chimney – it is understood from the Structural Engineer's report that the existing chimney is in a poor state of repair and is currently being supported by scaffolding to prevent collapse. Insulation is proposed at rafter level, and it is proposed to remove the existing conservatory and construct a new orangery. Installation of new timber windows and stone portico is proposed, and repairs/reconstruction of the existing Grade II listed wall is proposed with reclaimed bricks.
55. It is also proposed to demolish the non-significant outbuildings and sheds, construct a new single-storey yoga building and timber framed pool building, and the installation of a swimming pool, hot tub, and associated landscaping.
56. It is acknowledged that the Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) have commented on the proposal and note that there is insufficient information to assess the impact of the proposal on the significance of the Listed Building and that more details should be sought before approval of any works. This is acknowledged and is discussed more in application ref. 25/00221/LBC as relates to the character, significance, and heritage of the building.
57. The County Council's Historic Building Officer was consulted on the proposal and states

"The proposal is supported in principle as it secures the viable use and long-term maintenance of Little Stambridge Hall. Subject to the submission of a detailed specification of works, material selection and relevant reports, the proposal is considered to cause no harm to the significance of the listed building or its setting in terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024). Therefore, the proposal would preserve the special interest of the listed buildings in accordance with Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990."

58. Having regard to the above, there is no in-principle objection to the proposed development, and the development is considered to safeguard and secure the future of the Listed Building, hence the earlier grant of listed Building consent. The proposal is not considered significantly harmful or detrimental to the significance of the listed building. It is acknowledged that detailed specifications are recommended prior to commencement of any works and these will be secured by way of condition. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policy DM1 of the Development Management Plan, Section 16 of the Framework, and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Impact on Residential Amenity

59. Paragraph 135(f) of the Framework seeks to create places that are safe, inclusive, and accessible and which promote health and wellbeing, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. This is reflected in Policy DM1 of the Development Management Plan which seeks to ensure that new development avoid overlooking, ensuring privacy and promoting visual amenity, and creating a positive relationship with existing and nearby buildings.

60. Amenity is defined as a set of conditions that one ought to reasonably expect to enjoy on an everyday basis. When considering any development subject to a planning application a Local Planning Authority must give due regard to any significant and demonstratable impacts which would arise as a consequence of the implementation of a development proposal. This impact can be in terms of overlooking, loss of light, or creating a degree of overbearing enclosure (often referred to as the tunnelling effect) affecting the amenity of adjacent properties.

61. Paragraph 180 of the Framework states that Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment criterion (e) stipulates:

“Preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution”.

62. Furthermore, para. 191 states Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:

- *mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impact resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving*

*rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;
and*

- identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason.*

63. The proposed extensions and alterations in this instance are not considered to appear significantly overbearing or overshadowing for any neighbouring dwelling.
64. It is acknowledged that there have been several representations received regarding traffic along Little Stambridge Hall Lane which is impacting on the amenity of neighbouring dwellings. The comments make reference to speeding vehicles and pollution caused by vehicles.
65. In respect of speeding vehicles, this is discussed below in the highways section. In respect of pollution and emissions from vehicles, this is acknowledged. Notwithstanding, it is not considered in this instance that the proposed Change of Use would not generate significantly more additional traffic which would cause pollution, particularly given its close proximity to nearby industrial uses towards the north of the application site
66. Having regard to the above, the proposed development is not considered significantly detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring dwellings in this instance and is considered to accord with Policy DM1 of the Development Management Plan and the relevant provisions of the Framework.

Impact on Highway Safety

67. Paragraph 116 of the Framework states that development should only be refused on highway grounds if there would, after mitigation, be an unacceptable impact on the safety of the highway network, or the cumulative impacts on the highway network would be severe.
68. The application site is currently accessed from Little Stambridge Hall Lane. The application does not propose any alterations to the access and this would remain as is. Essex County Council (henceforth ECC) as Local Highways Authority were consulted on the proposal and do not wish to restrict the grant of planning. ECC raise no concerns over safety of the highway network as a result of the proposal.
69. It is acknowledged that there have been several representations received in relation to the impact of the development on the wider highway network – specifically due to speeding vehicles down Little Stambridge Hall Lane and the potential for collisions between children and vehicles. Whilst this is acknowledged, the Local Planning Authority has no statutory powers to deal with speeding vehicles – this should be

reported to the Police who have the relevant powers to enforce speed limits. In respect of collisions between vehicles and pedestrians/children, ECC as Highways Authority raise no concerns over the proposal and do not indicate that the proposal would give rise to an increased potential for collisions. Furthermore, the current situation exists and not attributable to the use proposed. It is difficult to ascribe harm from the additional traffic and nuisance against this existing backdrop that could significantly weigh against the proposal and the harm in the loss of the heritage asset.

- 70. Having regard to this, and in accordance with Paragraph 116 of the Framework, it is not considered that the proposed development would have a significant detrimental impact on the safety of the highway network to justify refusing the proposal in this instance.
- 71. Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Council's adopted Development Management Plan require adequate parking for a development. Policy DM30 seeks to create and maintain an accessible environment, requiring development proposals to provide sufficient parking provision.
- 72. The Council adopted the Essex Parking Guidance (2024) in January 2025, and this is the standard to which parking provision is assessed against. The Essex Parking Guidance requires development type in Use Class C1 to provide 1No. off-street parking space per room, for a total requirement of 7No. spaces.
- 73. There is a large shingle hardstanding driveway to the front elevation of the dwelling with sufficient parking space to accommodate 7No. vehicles. As such, the requirements of the Essex Parking Guidance are considered to be met in full and the proposal is in accordance with Policy DM30.
- 74. It is acknowledged that associated vehicular parking in this location would have some impact on the openness of the Green Belt. Notwithstanding, it is acknowledged that much of the application site is screened by vegetation in the form of mature trees. As such, the vehicular parking is unlikely to be seen from public viewpoints to a degree which would be significantly detrimental to the openness of the Green Belt.

Landscaping

- 75. The application site is lined to all boundaries by mature vegetative screening and trees. The application submission includes a Tree Constraints Plan, which has been subsequently reviewed by the Council's Arboricultural Officer. The Officer notes that no method statement has been provided, or information on how trees will be protected during the course of the development. Whilst this is acknowledged, none of the trees within the site that would be affected

by the proposal are protected by way of Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and the application site is not located in a Conservation Area and is not landscape sensitive.

76. As such, the application would not need prior written approval from the Local Planning Authority to remove these trees prior to the commencement of development. As such, it would be unreasonable for the Local Planning Authority to seek a method statement or any further information regarding the protection of trees during construction given that they are not protected. Notwithstanding, the submitted Design and Access Statement indicates that the location of the ancillary buildings has been carefully considered to minimise the impact of development on the root protection areas of these trees.

Flooding

77. According to the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Map, the application site is located entirely in Flood Zone 1, where there is the lowest probability of flooding from rivers and the sea and to where development should be directed. As such, the development would be compatible with the advice advocated within the Framework.

Drainage

78. The application is for a Change of Use to an existing dwelling which already benefits from drainage. No changes are proposed in relation to drainage or connection to the main sewer.

Archaeology

79. Colleagues in Essex County Council Historic Environment have been consulted on the proposal and stated the following:

"The buildings have the potential to contain fixtures, fittings or fabric that relate to its previous uses, origin, evolution and development, and other evidence such as re-used timbers or other structural elements, potentially linked to the former church. Given the programme of renovation and repair proposed to the structures, a Historic Building Recording (HBR) should be carried out prior to the proposed works at the Little Stambridge Hall. As part of the HBR a trained professional should be present during the renovation and repair works to record the exposed heritage assets."

80. As stated above, the archaeologist has no objection to the proposal subject to imposition of conditions relating to historic building monitoring records being completed prior to the commencement of any above ground works. These can be secured by way of condition in the event that the application is approved.

Biodiversity Net Gain

81. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a statutory approach to development that ensures biodiversity is left in a measurably better state than before. A minimum 10% net gain is now legally required under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021, subject to limited exceptions. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides direction on how mandatory biodiversity net gain should be applied through the planning process, with Paragraph 011 (Reference ID: 74-011-20240214) setting out the information that must accompany a planning application where the statutory biodiversity gain condition applies.
82. Given the biodiversity implications of the proposal, the case officer sought advice from Essex County Council Place Services Ecology. Following their review of the Biodiversity Assessment (ACJ Ecology, March 2025) and the Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain – Calculation Tool (March 2025), they advised that the information submitted was not sufficient to enable determination of the application. The consultees noted that no photographs or survey dates were provided, and there was no detail on plant species within the grassland, scrub or tree habitats. Habitat condition assessments were described as vague and focused on suggested improvements rather than recording the current condition, which undermined confidence in the baseline data. Further justification was also required for the classification of the majority of the site as “other neutral grassland” rather than “vegetated garden.” In addition, the assignment of medium strategic significance to the trees on site lacked justification, and with the imminent adoption of the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy, it was considered that the trees should likely be recorded as having low strategic significance.
83. As mandatory biodiversity net gain applies, the Local Planning Authority must secure a biodiversity gain condition as a pre-commencement requirement under paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This condition will ensure the submission and approval of a Biodiversity Gain Plan containing the completed metric calculations for pre- and post-development biodiversity values, pre- and post-development habitat plans, relevant legal agreements, biodiversity gain site register reference numbers where off-site units are proposed, and evidence of the purchase of statutory biodiversity credits if required. A Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) should also be secured where significant on-site enhancements are proposed. However, as the post-intervention values indicated that no significant enhancements are proposed, it was considered that an HMMP would not be necessary in this instance.
84. Following these initial comments, the applicant submitted updated biodiversity information. The case officer reconsulted Essex County Council Place Services Ecology, who confirmed that the revised submission was generally satisfactory but advised that certain matters

should still be addressed through the biodiversity gain condition. It was noted that a 10% measurable biodiversity net gain would not be achieved on-site and that the applicant should therefore secure off-site biodiversity units from a registered biodiversity gain site provider, or alternatively purchase statutory biodiversity credits from the Government as a last resort. A finalised Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Calculation Tool incorporating these off-site units or credits would need to be submitted as part of the Biodiversity Gain Plan. The consultees also highlighted that some trading rule issues remain, which must be addressed before final approval of the plan.

85. As the on-site rural trees have been classified as having medium strategic significance, it was recommended that a Wildlife-Sensitive Lighting Design Scheme be secured by condition if any external lighting is proposed. This would help minimise potential impacts on foraging and commuting bats. The consultees further supported the inclusion of reasonable biodiversity enhancement measures for protected, Priority and threatened species in line with paragraphs 187(d) and 193(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). These enhancements are separate from the mandatory 10% BNG requirement and should be detailed within a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy to be secured by condition.
86. This approach will enable the Local Planning Authority to demonstrate compliance with its statutory biodiversity duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (as amended), as well as the delivery of mandatory biodiversity net gain. Subject to conditions securing the Biodiversity Gain Condition and Plan, a Wildlife-Sensitive Lighting Design Scheme where relevant, and a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy, the proposal is considered acceptable in relation to biodiversity, in accordance with BS42020:2013 and relevant national and local planning policy.
87. In conclusion, the updated biodiversity information has addressed the key deficiencies previously identified, and the Council's ecological advisers are now generally satisfied that the proposal can comply with mandatory biodiversity net gain requirements, subject to appropriate conditions. While on-site measures alone will not achieve the required 10% net gain, this shortfall can be met through the purchase of registered off-site biodiversity units or statutory credits. The inclusion of a Biodiversity Gain Plan, together with appropriate enhancement and mitigation measures secured by condition, will ensure that the development delivers measurable biodiversity improvements consistent with the aims of the Environment Act 2021, the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant local planning policies.

On-Site Ecology

88. Paragraph 180 of the Framework indicates the importance of avoiding impacts on protected species and their habitat. Where impact is

considered to occur, appropriate mitigation to offset the identified harm is required. Policy DM27 of the Development Management Plan requires consideration of the impact of development on the natural landscape, including protected habitats and species. National planning policy also requires that the planning system contribute to, and enhance, the natural environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains where possible. In addition to the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, proposals for development should have regard to Local Biodiversity Action Plans – including those produced at District and County Level.

89. Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006) places a duty on public authorities to have regard for the purpose of conserving biodiversity. PAS 2010 aims to reduce the varied applications of this obligation, ensuring that all parties have a clearer understanding of information required at the planning stage. Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) identifies habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. There are 56 habitats and 943 Species of Principal Importance in England (SPIE), and most of the UK's protected species are listed under Section 41. Whilst the possible presence of a protected species is accompanied by legal obligations and will remain the first consideration of planning departments, the total biodiversity value of a site must now be considered.

90. The application submission includes a Bat Survey produced by John Dobson (Essex Mammal Surveys), dated December 2024. It reaches the following conclusions:

- a. Three attic spaces were inspected; the roof has been insulated under the grant scheme in 2011.
- b. There is no evidence of bats within the loft spaces inspected, or along the eaves of the dwelling.
- c. Externally, there are no cavities which may be used by roosting bats.
- d. The outbuildings are in poor condition and some are collapsed, therefore are unsuitable for roosting bats.
- e. There is no vegetation affected by the proposal that has crevices, woodpecker holes, or loose bark that would be utilised by roosting bats.
- f. Overall, there is negligible potential for roosting bats at the application site.

91. The officer acknowledges the conclusions of the bat survey. It is unlikely that the proposal would have a detrimental impact on roosting bats as there is negligible potential for roosting bats. Notwithstanding in the event that permission is granted, the applicant is reminded that if roosting bats, or evidence of such, are found during development, that all work should cease and a qualified ecologist should be consulted.

Planning Balance

92. It is acknowledged that the application site is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt, where there is a presumption against inappropriate development. As discussed above, it is acknowledged that in principle, the proposed development would be inappropriate development within the Green Belt. Notwithstanding, it is also acknowledged that there are very special circumstances in this instance that outweigh the harm caused to the Green Belt by virtue of its inappropriateness. These include the necessary renovations and repairs to a Grade II Listed Building, a designated heritage asset. As such, the proposal is recommended for approval.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

93. The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes a decision. The duty requires us to have regard to the need:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- To foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

94. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnerships, and pregnancy/maternity.

95. Taking account of the nature of the proposed development and representations received, it is considered that the proposed development would not result in any impacts (either positive or negative) on protected groups as defined under the Equality Act 2010.

CONCLUSION

96. Approve.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS (summary of responses):

Stambridge Parish Council : No representations received.

Rochford District Council Economic Growth Team:

The Economic Growth team supports this application for the following reasons:

- Potential increase to local economy with new job opportunities
- Potential increase to local visitor economy with overnight visitors

- Increase to very limited stock of serviced accommodation in district

This application is in line with the Destination Development priorities (priority 4 Develop accommodation) within the Rochford District Culture & Visitor Economy Strategy.

Essex County Council Highway Authority:

The information that was submitted in association with the application has been fully considered by the Highway Authority. The proposal retains the existing access and extensive car parking facilities, therefore:

From a highway and transportation perspective the impact of the proposal is acceptable to the Highway Authority subject to the following condition:

“Areas within the curtilage of the site for the purpose of the reception and storage of building materials shall be identified clear of the highway.

Reason: To ensure that appropriate loading / unloading facilities are available to ensure that the highway is not obstructed during the construction period in the interest of highway safety in accordance with policy DM1”.

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB):

Thank you for notifying the SPAB of the above application affecting this 16th century Grade II listed building. We note that the application is not for Listed Building Consent, which is required for any alterations, extensions, or demolitions that affect the character of a listed building. However, in the absence of this, we are happy to comment on the Full Planning Application and offer the following observations and advice.

The Heritage statement was written in 2021 and therefore may need to be updated. The document contains a brief description of the building with some helpful dates concerning its evolution; however, it does not contain any assessment of the impact that the works would have on the building's special interest, or details to show how historic fabric would be protected.

Proposals include the demolition and replacement of outbuildings, but the age and significance of these have not been described. The structural engineer's report contains a number of recommendations; however, it is not clear if any of these have been included in the application.

Internal alterations, although stated to be reversible, have not been assessed in relation to the harm that would be caused to the historic plan form, or what impact they would have on internal mouldings and other architectural features.

The proposed new Georgian portico at the main entrance affects the character of the west elevation, but the impact of the proposal has not been assessed.

We would also expect to see a detailed specification for the works which explains in detail the full extent of the works to be carried out and the materials and methods that will be used. This should encompass any thermal upgrades, changes to doors and windows, and any works to the flooring, walls, and ceiling finishes. Service penetrations should also be carefully considered. The involvement of a conservation-accredited architect in compiling a specification is strongly recommended. In the absence of this information, it is not possible to understand how the work will impact the historic building's interest.

The Society therefore urges you to seek further detail from the applicant on the parts of the building affected by the proposals. The special interest of the listed building, and the impact of the proposals on it, must be understood before the local planning authority can grant consent or otherwise.

We would be happy to look at these proposals again once they have been revised. However, if this information is not forthcoming, we recommend that permission is refused.

Essex County Council Place Services Ecology:

We have reviewed the documents supplied by the applicant, relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected & Priority species and habitats and identification of proportionate mitigation. We are not satisfied that appropriate information with regard to mandatory biodiversity net gains has been supplied for the application prior to determination.

(Updated Comments received on the 7th November 2025)

We are satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available to support determination of this application.

This provides certainty for the LPA of the likely impacts on designated sites, protected and Priority species & habitats and, with appropriate mitigation measures secured, the development can be made acceptable.

The mitigation measures identified in the Bat Survey report (Essex Mammal Surveys, November 2024) should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full. This is necessary to conserve and enhance protected and Priority species particularly those recorded in the locality.

With regard to mandatory biodiversity net gains, it is highlighted that we now support the submitted Statutory Biodiversity Metric, baseline habitat map and condition assessments. Biodiversity net gains is a statutory requirement set out under Schedule 7A (Biodiversity Gain in England) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and we are satisfied that submitted information provides sufficient information at application stage. As a result, a Biodiversity Gain Plan should be submitted prior to commencement, which also includes the following:

- a) A Biodiversity Gain Plan form (Ideally using the Government's template: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-gain-plan>)
- b) The completed metric calculation tool showing the calculations of the pre-development and post-intervention biodiversity values.
- c) Pre and post development habitat plans.
- d) Legal agreement(s)
- e) Biodiversity Gain Site Register reference numbers (if using off-site units).
- f) Proof of purchase (if buying statutory biodiversity credits at a last resort).

Essex County Council Conservation and Historic Advice:

The principle of the proposed works is supported. The scheme seeks to secure the long-term use and maintenance of Little Stambridge Hall in a manner that respects its architectural and historic significance. Several elements of the proposal were discussed during the site visit, and it was concluded that:

Use of Concrete for Floor Replacement

The existing floorboards and parquet were confirmed to be of no historic significance, and their replacement is acceptable. However, concerns were raised regarding the proposed use of concrete to replace the joisted floor structure. This approach is not supported, and a more sympathetic method should be adopted.

Alterations to the Staircase

The staircase has an Arts and Crafts style and appears commensurate with the 1970s parquet flooring. Whilst the lower section holds some historic value as evidence of the building's evolution, its removal, although resulting in some loss of historic fabric, is considered justified under Paragraph 213 of the NPPF (December 2024).

Demolition of Outbuildings and Conservatory

These structures were confirmed to be of no historic or architectural significance. Their demolition is therefore acceptable.

New Openings for the Orangery and Loggia

The proposed new openings in the east elevation were discussed and, although they will result in some loss of historic fabric, the intervention is considered justified due to the removal of the existing unsympathetic conservatory which detracts from the architectural interest of the front elevation of Little Stambridge Hall.

Basement Tanking

The basement is subject to flooding. It is recommended that the source of water ingress be investigated thoroughly. Tanking should be considered only as a last resort. If necessary, the Delta membrane system, as recommended by Historic England, SPAB etc, is the preferred method.

All other works are considered acceptable in principle. However, a detailed specification of the proposed works will be required, clearly outlining the full scope of interventions, including the materials and methods to be used. The proposed works must be carefully designed to be appropriate and sympathetic to the historic character of the building. This should include any thermal upgrades, alterations to doors and windows, and works to floors, walls, and ceilings. The specification should be prepared by a conservation-accredited architect to ensure the approach is sensitive and preserves the building's significance. It is also recommended that a CARE-accredited structural engineer be appointed to assess and justify any structural interventions.

The proposal is supported in principle as it secures the viable use and long-term maintenance of Little Stambridge Hall. Subject to the submission of a detailed specification of works, material selection and relevant reports, the proposal is considered to cause no harm to the significance of the listed building or its setting in terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024). Therefore, the proposal would preserve the special interest of the listed buildings in accordance with Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

No objection subject to the imposition of the following conditions

- Before the commencement of works, the detailed Schedule of Works, method statements and structural reports regarding all works to the historic core of the buildings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and shall be permanently maintained as such.
- A schedule with clear photographs of the types and colour of the materials to be used in the external finishes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to their first use on site. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.
- Internal works shall not be commenced until a schedule of all new, internal surface materials including walls, ceilings and floors including insulations and a schedule of all internal and external joinery indicating the proposed finish and decoration to be used has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and shall be permanently maintained as such.
- Details of proposed new windows, doors, rooflights, eaves, verges and cills to be used by section and elevation at scales between 1:20 and 1:1 as appropriate shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the

local planning authority prior to their first installation or construction on site. Works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and shall be permanently maintained as such.

- Detailed section drawings of the build up of walls/ floors/ ceilings in at, a scale between 1:20 and 1:1 as appropriate, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the commencement of internal works. Works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and shall be permanently maintained as such.
- Prior to installation, drawn details of all new electrical and plumbing service routes and ducting, including the proposed sprinklers, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and then shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Essex County Council Place Services (Archaeology):

“The application is for renovate/repair existing grade II listed house, replace ancillary accommodation and construct a swimming pool for use as rental accommodation and a yoga retreat.

The building proposed for renovation and repair is a Grade II listed building (List Entry 1112574) with origins dating back to at least the sixteenth century, as the site depicted on the Chapman and Andre map of 1777. The submitted Heritage Statement says the building was constructed in phases, gaining additions right through to the twentieth century. The Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) shows that the buildings of Stambridge Hall are located within a medieval moated site (EHER 13607). Several of the structures associated with the hall located within the moated site are post medieval in date and listed, including the wall attached to little Stambridge Hall and enclosing garden to south (List Entry 1307034), Cartlodge attached to garden wall (List Entry 1112575), and the Lodge (List Entry 1168411). The moated site is also the location of the demolished medieval St Marys Church and graveyard (EHER 13606). The church can also be seen on the Chapman and Andre map of 1777 and is reported to have been in existence until 1923.

The buildings have the potential to contain fixtures, fittings or fabric that relate to its previous uses, origin, evolution and development, and other evidence such as re-used timbers or other structural elements, potentially linked to the former church. Given the programme of renovation and repair proposed to the structures, a Historic Building Recording (HBR) should be carried out prior to the proposed works at the Little Stambridge Hall. As part of the HBR a trained professional should be present during the renovation and repair works to record the exposed heritage assets.

With the above evidence considered, the following recommendation is made, with any approved application, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 218:

Recommendation 1: A Historic Building Recording:

1. No demolition, conversion or alterations shall commence until a programme of historic building recording has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) to be submitted by the applicant for approval by the Local Planning Authority.
2. No demolition, conversion or alterations shall take place until the satisfactory completion of the recording in accordance with the WSI submitted.
3. The applicant will submit a report detailing the results of the recording programme to the Local Planning Authority for approval and confirm the deposition of the archive to an appropriate depository as identified and agreed in the WSI. This shall be done within 6 months of the date of completion of the archaeological fieldwork unless otherwise agreed in advance in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

A building-recording brief detailing the requirements will be produced from this office on request.

As noted in the Heritage Statement there is the potential for archaeological deposits relating to the infilled former moat and the demolished St Mary's Church and graveyard to survive within the proposed development site. The groundworks have the potential to impact these archaeological deposits, therefore a programme of archaeological trial-trenching and excavation is recommended.

The following recommendation is made in line with the National Planning Policy Framework:

Recommendation 2: A programme of archaeological trial-trenching and excavation:

1. No development or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until a programme of archaeological investigation has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which has been submitted by the applicant, for approval by the Local Planning Authority.
2. No development or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until the completion of the programme of archaeological investigation identified in the WSI defined in 1 above, and any subsequent mitigation has been agreed.
3. The applicant will submit a final archaeological report or (if appropriate) a Post Excavation Assessment report and/or an Updated Project Design for approval by the Local Planning Authority. This shall be submitted within 6 months of the date of completion of the archaeological fieldwork unless otherwise agreed in advance by the Local Planning Authority.

The work will comprise a programme of trial-trenching followed by detailed excavation of archaeological deposits identified. An archaeological brief detailing the requirements can be produced from this office on request.

Neighbour representations:

3 letters of objection have been received raising the following points (summarised):

- No objection to the proposal provided a new access road is provided well away from the existing lane and not within sight of Amberley.
- The development of light industry and the farm has greatly increased traffic along a single-track lane.
- Traffic on the single track access road is becoming dangerous and the development will worsen this problem.
- Speeding is an issue on the lane which will worsen.
- The Council should consider the imposition of conditions to protect the environment and to prevent speeding

Relevant Development Plan Policies:

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024 revised in February 2025).

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy Adopted Version (December 2011) – CP1, GB1, GB2.

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Development Management Plan (December 2014) – policies DM1, DM3, DM12, DM25, DM27, DM30.

The Essex Design Guide (2018).

Essex Planning Officers Association Parking Guidance Part1: Parking Standards Design and Good Practice (September 2024) (Adopted 16th January 2025).

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve

Conditions:

2. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

3. The development shall be undertaken in strict accordance with the plans referenced 3212/09, 3212/03, 3212/06 (Revision C), 3212/11, 3212/08 (Revision D), 3212/07 (Revision B), 3212/05 (Revision G).

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is completed out in accordance with details considered as part of the application.

4. No above ground works (excluding demolition or excavation as required by condition No. 5) shall take place until samples/schedules of materials has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Clear photographs including the types and colours of the materials to be used in the external finishes of the development hereby approved shall be made available to the Local Planning Authority when discharging this condition. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details thereafter.

REASON: To ensure that the external appearance of the building/structure is acceptable in the interests of visual amenity in compliance with the councils Local Development Framework Development Management Plan policy DM1.

5. No works (including any demolition) shall be carried out until a programme of historic building recording has been secured in accordance with a Written scheme of Investigation (WSI) that must first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The WSI must include provision for the production and deposition of a final report to the building survey carried out within the local Historic environment Record (HER). A copy of the final survey report shall be placed within the local HER within 6 months of its completion.

REASON: To safeguard the identification and recording of any features of architectural, historic and archaeological interest associated with the site and the fabric of the building.

6. No development or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until a programme of archaeological investigation has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The WSI must be prepared by a qualified archaeologist or archaeological group identifying the extent and significance of any archaeological items or features that might be affected by the development and propose a mitigation strategy for such items or features and will comprise a programme of trial-trenching followed by detailed excavation of archaeological deposits identified. The development hereby permitted shall not be first brought into use until a written report detailing the results and post investigation assessments of any archaeological works that have been undertaken on the site has

been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure that any archaeological items and/or features are recorded in a manner proportionate to their significance

7. No development above ground level shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscaping works, including boundary treatments, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include, but not be limited to, finished levels or contours, means of enclosure, hard surfacing materials, planting plans (including species, sizes, and planting densities), and schedules of maintenance for a minimum period of five years following completion.

All hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatments shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of the development or in the first planting season following completion, whichever is sooner. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

REASON: To ensure that an appropriate landscaping scheme and boundary treatments are provided in the interests of visual amenity, biodiversity enhancement, and to safeguard the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant local plan policies.

8. All mitigation measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Bat Survey report (Essex Mammal Surveys, November 2024) as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

This may include the appointment of an appropriately competent person e.g. an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) to provide on-site ecological expertise during construction. The appointed person shall undertake all activities, and works shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved details.”

REASON: To conserve protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

9. Prior to any works above slab level, a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for protected, priority and threatened species, prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist in line with the recommendations of the Bat

Survey report (Essex Mammal Surveys, November 2024), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy shall include the following:

- a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;
- b) detailed designs or product descriptions to achieve stated objectives;
- c) locations of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans (where relevant);
- d) persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures; and
- e) details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).

The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

REASON: To enhance protected, Priority and threatened species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under paragraph 187d of NPPF 2024 and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

10. Prior to occupation, a “lighting design strategy for biodiversity” for external lighting in accordance with Guidance Note 08/23 (Institute of Lighting Professionals) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

- a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and
- b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through provision of appropriate lighting plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the scheme and maintained thereafter in accordance with the scheme. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

REASON: To allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

11. Areas within the curtilage of the site for the purpose of the reception and storage of building materials shall be identified clear of the highway.

REASON: To ensure that appropriate loading / unloading facilities are available to ensure that the highway is not obstructed during the construction period in the interest of highway safety in accordance with policy DM1.

The local Ward Members for the above application are Cllr. S. Wootton, Cllr. Phil Shaw and Cllr. Mrs. L. Shaw.