

CONSERVATION TEAM CONSULTATION APPLICATION RESPONSE

APPLICATION REF:	25/03098/S73
CASE OFFICER:	TR
APPLICATION SITE:	80 Hermitage Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 1DB
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Section 73 Application: Variation of condition 2 (revised plans) 24/01108/FP granted 15.08.2024 for Conversion of first floor accommodation from Class E use to lass C3 to create 2 x 1-beds flats and subdivision of existing second floor flat to provide 2 x 1-bed flats. External alterations.

RECOMMENDATION:

Conservation did not respond to the consultation relating to appn ref: 24/01108/FP. Having said that, I raise **NO OBJECTION** on the basis that the proposal will not impact upon the setting of the nearest listed building or harm the character or appearance of Hitchin Conservation Area. The proposal satisfies the provisions of Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the aims of para 135(c) and Section 16 of the NPPF and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

SHORT SUMMARY:

Impact on character and appearance of Hitchin Conservation Area.

The proposal will have a limited impact upon the above designated heritage asset.

SITE CONTEXT:

Although this application's address is given as **80 Hermitage Road**, it is noted that the address for ref: 24/01108/FP is nos. **74, 80 and 81 Hermitage Road**, Hitchin. I assume that you can have a Section 73 Application where the address only relates to part of the previous main application?

No.80 is an unlisted building located within the Hitchin Conservation Area and stands opposite a row of Buildings of Local Interest and north-east of nos. 7 - 8 Portmill Lane (grade II). The CA is a Designated Heritage Asset for the purpose of applying the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF.



DETAILED ANALYSIS AND CONSIDERATIONS:

According to the submitted Planning Statement (which does have application site address as 74, 80 & 81 Hermitage Road, Hitchin), this Section 73 application seeks to vary the approved plans condition attached to planning permission 24/01108/FP. The revised drawings 03F and 04C incorporate two minor amendments to the approved scheme:

1. *Provision of an external painted steel fire-escape staircase on the south elevation to serve the two second-floor flats.*
2. *Minor alterations to the fenestration on the south elevation associated with the installation of the staircase.*

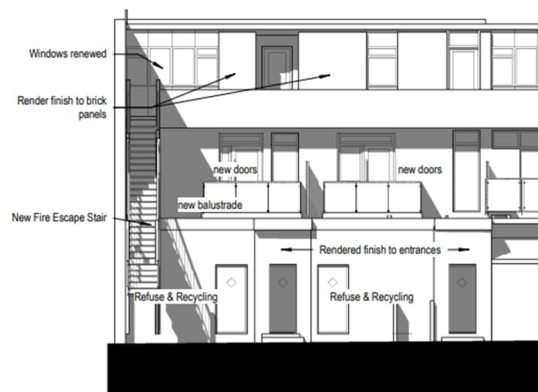
No other changes are proposed

The Planning Statement goes on to say:

The revised drawings 03F and 04C introduce:

- *A lightweight steel escape stair, powder-coated in a recessive colour.*
- *The staircase is positioned at the western end of the south elevation, constructed tight against the brick wall of the adjoining Premier Inn hotel, ensuring it is as discreetly located as possible and largely screened from wider public views.*
- *Minor adjustments to windows and doors on the south elevation to integrate the staircase, enable safe use, and retain the balance of the elevation.*

All other elements of the approved development remain unchanged, including the number and layout of the flats and all access, servicing, and amenity arrangements.



Proposed South Elevation

1 : 100

Photos on file



HERITAGE POLICY ASSESSMENT:

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

Sections 66(1) & 72(1)

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031:

Policy HE1

NPPF (December 2024):

The following paragraphs are relevant:

- **135 c)** (*sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment*),
- **207** (*local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting*)
- **210** (*desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*),
- **212** (*great weight should be given to the asset's conservation*),
- **213** (*clear and convincing justification*), and
- **215** (*harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use*).

CONCLUSION:

The proposal is considered **UNOBJECTIONABLE**.

OFFICER: Mark Simmons

DATE: 12/02/2026