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Heritage Statement

Project Title:
9 Whitethorn Lane

Project Description:
Infill rear extension and alterations to doors and windows.

Applicant:
Jane Lyons

Architectural Designers:
RD Designs and Partners Ltd.



1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by RD Designs & Partners Ltd in support of a householder planning application at 9 Whitethorn Lane, Letchworth Garden City.

The proposals comprise the erection of a single storey rear extension following removal of the existing conservatory, together with replacement windows, alterations to external openings, rooflights, roof glazing and associated internal alterations.

The purpose of this statement is to consider the proposed works in the context of the character of the existing property and its wider Letchworth Garden City setting.

The proposals have also been considered separately by Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation and received First Stage Approval on 13 August 2026 under reference HA-001271. The approval relates to the documents numbered WTL/09/01–06.

2. Site and Surrounding Area

The application property is located on Whitethorn Lane within the Modern Character Area of Letchworth Garden City.

The surrounding area is predominantly residential, with detached and semi detached properties set within established plots. Generous gardens, established building lines and mature planting are common features of the area and make an important contribution to its character.

There is some variation in the age, form and architectural appearance of properties along Whitethorn Lane. Despite this variation, the relatively low density of development and the relationship between the houses and their landscaped plots provide a consistent Garden City character.

The application property sits comfortably within this setting and benefits from a generous rear garden with established planting and mature trees. The proposals have therefore been developed with the intention of improving the existing accommodation whilst retaining the character of the property and its relationship with its plot.

3. Proposed Works

The existing conservatory to the rear of the property will be removed and replaced with a single storey rear extension.

The works will allow the ground floor accommodation to be reorganised to provide a more practical kitchen, dining and living arrangement, with improved natural light and a better connection between the house and rear garden.

Alterations are also proposed to a number of existing window and door openings, together with the installation of rooflights and roof glazing.

The majority of the works are positioned to the rear of the property and will have limited impact upon its appearance from Whitethorn Lane. The front elevation and the general character of the dwelling as seen from the street will remain substantially unchanged.

4. Design and Appearance

The proposed extension has been kept to a single storey and is modest in relation to the overall size of the existing dwelling.

Its position to the rear ensures that it remains secondary to the main house and does not compete with the established form of the property.

The design has intentionally been kept relatively simple. Rather than introducing a contrasting architectural form, the extension has been designed to sit comfortably alongside the existing building whilst providing the additional space required by the applicant.

The larger areas of glazing are concentrated on the rear elevation and face into the property's own garden. This allows a more contemporary treatment to be introduced without materially changing the appearance of the dwelling within the street.

5. Materials

The external materials will follow those forming part of the scheme granted First Stage Approval by Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation.

External walls associated with the rear extension will be rendered and finished to match the existing property.

The flat roof will be finished in black or dark grey EPDM, or a similar appropriate finish, with anthracite grey fascia.

The new rear patio doors will comprise anthracite aluminium framed units with horizontal glazing bars, providing a simple heritage style appearance. The Heritage Foundation approved documents refer specifically to the ALUK Heritage Door System or an equivalent appearance.

Replacement sash windows will be conservation style uPVC units designed to closely reflect the proportions, colour and general appearance of the existing windows. The existing stained glass window will be retained.

Rooflights and roof glazing will be incorporated into the existing and proposed roof forms as shown on the submitted drawings.

Overall, the proposed materials have been selected to provide a sympathetic relationship with the existing house whilst allowing a slightly more contemporary treatment to the rear garden elevation.

6. Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation

The proposals have already been considered through the separate Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation process.

First Stage Approval was granted on 13 August 2026 under reference HA-001271 for the approved documents numbered WTL/09/01–06. The approval requires the works to be undertaken in accordance with those approved documents.

The Heritage Foundation approval is separate from the statutory planning process and the approval itself confirms that consent from North Hertfordshire District Council may also be required.

Nevertheless, the First Stage Approval demonstrates that the external alterations have already been considered in relation to the particular character and design requirements applying within Letchworth Garden City.

The approved scheme retains the established scale of the dwelling and its relationship with the surrounding garden. The more noticeable alterations remain concentrated to the rear, whilst the principal appearance of the property from Whitethorn Lane is retained.

7. Landscaping and Setting

The proposals are concentrated around the existing dwelling and do not materially alter the established garden setting of the property.

The mature trees and principal areas of established planting are to be retained. The generous rear garden will therefore continue to provide an appropriate landscaped setting to the dwelling.

This is particularly important within the context of Letchworth Garden City, where the relationship between buildings, gardens and mature landscaping forms an important part of the character of established residential areas.

8. Conclusion

The proposals represent a modest alteration and improvement to an established dwelling within Letchworth Garden City.

The single storey rear extension will improve the usability of the existing accommodation without dominating the original property or materially changing its appearance within Whitethorn Lane.

The proposed materials and detailing have been selected to sit comfortably with the existing house, whilst the more contemporary glazed elements are appropriately located to the rear.

The established garden setting and mature landscaping will be retained and the principal appearance of the dwelling from the street will remain substantially unchanged.

The proposals have also received First Stage Approval from Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation under reference HA-001271.

For these reasons, the works are considered to respect the character of the existing dwelling and the wider Modern Character Area of Letchworth Garden City..