

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Mark Simmons.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/01652/LBC	Replace 7 no. single-glazed timber-frame windows with double-glazed, timber-frame windows and replace front door and frame.	84 Ridge Road Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 1PT

Submitted Plan Nos

WF DG1 Location plan WG1 WG2 WF1 WF2 WF3 DG1 Windows section

1.0 Policies

HE1 Designated heritage assets

2.0 **Site History**

- 2.1 Included below is the site's planning history excluding several 'Approval of Details' applications.

07/00642/1LB - Two storey side and part two storey, part single storey rear extension incorporating single garage and internal alterations.
R 02.05.2007

07/00643/1HH - Two storey side and part two storey, part single storey rear extension incorporating single garage.
R 02.05.2007

07/01520/1HH - Single storey rear extension, detached single garage and fencing (as amended by plans received on 17th August 2007).
CP 30.08.2007

07/01547/1LB - Single storey rear extension, detached single garage and internal alterations (as amended by plans received on 17th August 2007).
CCON 30.08.2007

21/00048/FPH - Erection of a non-permanent timber and glass garden pod / summerhouse in the rear garden with a footprint of 2.1m x 1.4m and requiring a site area measuring 3m x 2.4m over an existing deck area.
CP 18.02.2021

3.0 **Policies**

- 3.1 Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031 is relevant.
- 3.2 The following paragraphs of Section 20 of the National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026) are particularly relevant:
- ☐ HE4: Securing the conservation of heritage assets
 - ☐ HE5: Assessing effects on heritage assets
 - ☐ HE6: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets

4.0 **Representations**

- 4.1 **Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation** – No comments received.

Press & site notices – No comments received.

5.0 **Planning Considerations**

5.1 Site and Surroundings

- 5.1.1 Birds Hill Estate, Nos. 2 - 122 (evens) Ridge Road, Letchworth Garden City are grade II listed and are located within the Letchworth Conservation Area (LCA). The building and the LCA are designated heritage assets and the list entry for these properties is provided at the following link:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1347664?section=official-list-entry>

- 5.1.2 As acknowledged in the submitted Heritage Statement: *"The estate is significant as the earliest realised example of the Garden City village green layout, published by Parker and Unwin in The Art of Building a Home (1901)".*

5.2 Proposal

- 5.2.1 The application is described as: **Replace 7 no. single-glazed timber-frame windows with double-glazed, timber-frame windows and replace front door and frame.**

- 5.2.2 Paragraph 2 of **Policy HE5: Assessing effects on heritage assets** of the NPPF states:

2. Assessments of the potential effects of development proposals on the significance of heritage assets (including through effects on their setting) should identify whether proposals would be likely to:

a. Have a positive effect, which is where the significance of a heritage asset would be enhanced, or better revealed; or

b. Have no effect on the significance of a heritage asset; or

c. Result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset, either from work affecting the asset itself or from development within its setting. The degree of harm should be identified: substantial harm would occur where the development proposal would seriously affect a key element of the asset's significance; or

d. Cause the total loss of the significance of a heritage asset.

- 5.2.3 This application is also considered in the context of the recently updated NPPF and particularly paragraph 4 of **Policy HE6: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets** which states (my emphasis in bold):

Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal. Important public benefits can include securing the long-term reuse of a vacant or underused listed building and enabling energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed.

Historic England guidance entitled 'Traditional Windows: their care, repair and upgrading' published in 2017.

5.2.4 This guidance describes that assessing the significance of a window and understanding the contribution it makes to the significance of the building is the key first step in deciding the correct approach to any alterations or upgrading. Where historic fenestration survives, HE explains that it is often an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved and repaired wherever possible. It describes how to determine the architectural and historic significance of windows so that decisions about altering them can be made in an informed way.

5.2.5 At page 54 of this guidance it states:

"If used in multi-paned windows, IGUs will generally be less efficient than secondary glazing since even the most efficient units will not overcome thermal bridging through the frame and glazing bars....".

5.2.6 Further on, Historic England's general approach to the alteration or replacement of windows is set out below:

1. Where historic windows, whether original or later insertions, make a positive contribution to the significance of a listed building they should be retained and repaired where possible. If beyond repair, they should be replaced with accurate copies.

2. Where historic windows have already been replaced with windows whose design follows historic patterns, these usually make a positive contribution to the significance of listed buildings. When they do, they should therefore be retained and repaired where possible. If beyond repair, they should be replaced with accurate copies.

3. Where historic windows or replacement windows of historic pattern survive without historic glass it may be possible to introduce slim-profile double-glazing without harming the significance of the listed building. There are compatibility issues to consider as the introduction of double-glazing can require the renewal of the window frame to accommodate thicker glazing, thereby harming significance. These issues are covered in Section 4 of this guidance.

4. Where historic windows have been replaced with ones whose design does not follow historic patterns, these are unlikely to contribute to the significance of listed buildings. Replacing such windows with new windows of a sympathetic historic pattern, whether single-glazed or incorporating slim-profile double-glazing, may cause no additional harm. It also provides an opportunity to enhance the significance of the building, which is the desired outcome under national policy.

5. Where a new window or re-glazing is agreed, the reflective properties of secondary and double-glazing as compared to modern, polished single-glazing, do not usually harm the significance of the building. But when new multi-paned windows are proposed, the desirability of reproducing broken reflections by individually glazing each pane should be considered. Where the aesthetic value of the building is high, then the impact on the whole of the relevant elevation should be considered, including the desirability of accurately matching other windows.

Guidance on Alterations to Listed Buildings **IHBC Toolbox Guidance Note GN2021/1 - January 2021**

5.2.7 At 4.3.4 it states:

"Proposals to double-glaze existing windows are often inappropriate as well as having a surprisingly high carbon impact and a short lifespan. Thicker glazing units require glazing bars to be modified to accommodate them and the window will then have a very different appearance."

Whilst at 4.3.5 it states:

“Applied glazing bars to the surface of windows or sandwiched between panes of double-glazing are generally inappropriate. Secondary glazing may be acceptable subject to careful location of the framing elements so as not to be disruptive to the visual appearance when seen from the exterior.”

5.3 Key Issues

- 5.3.1 The key issues are to consider the impact of the placement windows upon the listed building’s special character and on the character and appearance of the Letchworth Conservation Area.
- 5.3.2 The existing windows are single-glazed and timber framed with a combination of side-hung casements, top-hung casements and fixed lights. Importantly, the windows have no glazing bars.
- 5.3.3 An inventory of windows for this range of listed buildings was compiled in June 1999 but unfortunately a copy of this inventory cannot be found. Furthermore, it is understood that a ‘moratorium amnesty’ on unauthorised replacement windows on listed properties at Ridge Road before 1st October 2005 was imposed at that time.
- 5.3.4 Unlike several other applications for listed building consent to replace windows on these Ridge Road properties with Upvc framed windows (some incorporating glazing bars), this is not proposed at no.84. The Heritage Statement states:

The proposal is to replace 7 no. existing windows and 1 no. Front door and frame with like-for-like timber units, due to deterioration of the original materials and to improve the thermal/energy efficiency of the property by utilising specialist heritage grade slimline double glazing. The new joinery will be:

- ☐ *Constructed from high-quality, durable hardwood or softwood (e.g. Accoya or similar, depending on local approval)*
- ☐ *Replicating existing dimensions, profiles, and opening mechanisms*
- ☐ *Painted in a heritage-appropriate finish (e.g. white sashes, black frames, if agreed)*
- ☐ *Fitted into existing openings, with no enlargement or repositioning*

Where possible, original ironmongery and detailing will be retained and reused. Any double glazing will be slimline heritage glass (if permitted), set within traditional profiles.

- 5.3.5 Importantly, the proposed windows incorporate 80mm middle rail / split transoms thereby maintaining existing methods of opening and a 16mm double-glazing system is shown. Both details are considered acceptable.

5.4 Alternative Options

- 5.4.1 Nonapplicable.

5.5 Pre-Commencement Conditions

- 5.5.1 Nonapplicable.

5.6 **Conclusion**

- 5.6.1 The existing windows and front door are not considered to possess such intrinsic interest to justify retention. The works to windows will have a small impact upon significance resulting from the introduction of slimline heritage glass, but this is offset by the positive impacts of enhanced thermal efficiency. Retaining and reusing original ironmongery will also ensure greater authenticity.
- 5.6.2 It is considered that the proposal will not occasion harm to the listed building's special character or harm the character or appearance of the Letchworth Conservation Area. The proposal would therefore satisfy the provisions of Sections 16(2) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the aims of Section 20 of the NPPF and the aims of Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

6.0 **Recommendation**

- 6.1 I recommend that listed building consent be **GRANTED** subject to the following condition:

1. The work to which this consent relates shall be begun by not later than the expiration of the period of 3 years from the date of this notice.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. All original ironmongery capable of reuse shall be set aside for use on the new windows unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Prior to the manufacture of the new windows, if new ironmongery is necessary details shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and if acceptable shall be approved. Thereafter where new windows are identified to receive new ironmongery the new windows shall be manufactured in accordance with the approved ironmongery.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of the listed building under Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Signed  Anne McDonald Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 3 September 2026	