

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Tricia Craggs.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
26/01605/LBC	Replace all but one windows with double-glazed 12mm slimline sealed units. Replace one window with matching existing timber glazed door. Replace 2no. rear doors with part-glazed, timber stable doors and replace existing glazed double doors with similar glazed doors. Introduce two support pillars to each of the existing rear porch canopies.	Old Church House Gurneys Lane Holwell Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 3SN

Submitted Plan Nos

Location Plan PL01 Design sectional drawings First Floor Plan Ground Floor Plan

1.0 Policies

HE1 Designated heritage assets

2.0 Site History

2.1 Although not the most recent planning history the following is most relevant:

85/00901/1- Erection of two storey side and rear extensions following demolition of outbuildings.

3.0 Policies

3.1 Section 20: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment of the National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026). Relevant paragraph numbers at Section 20 are as follows: HE4, HE5 and HE 6.

Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

4.0 Representations

4.1 **Holwell Parish Council** – No comment.

Press & site notices – No comments received.

5.0 Planning Considerations

5.1 **Site and Surroundings**

5.1.1 Old Church House Gurneys Lane Holwell is a Grade II listed building. The link to list description is copied below

[Old Church House, Holwell - 1103219 | Historic England](#)

The building is located in the Holwell Conservation Area.

5.2 **Proposal**

5.2.1 The application is described as:

Replace all but one windows with double-glazed 12mm slimline sealed units. Replace one window with matching existing timber glazed door. Replace 2no. rear doors with part-glazed, timber stable doors and replace existing glazed double doors with similar glazed doors. Introduce two support pillars to each of the existing rear porch canopies.

5.3 **Key Issues**

- 5.3.1 The main issue is to consider the impact of the works on the special character of the listed building and upon the Holwell Conservation Area.
- 5.3.2 Windows are often a significant feature of listed buildings. They strongly contribute to a building's interest and appearance. Any changes can noticeably alter how the building and area looks. There is much by the way of guidance provided by local planning authorities which discourages the installation of double-glazed windows into listed buildings and whilst North Herts does not have specific guidance on this matter, it is important that the following are considered when considering replacement of windows:
- ☐ Evidence of craftsmanship
 - ☐ Use of old or rare materials
 - ☐ Detail of design

If the existing windows contribute positively to the building's special character and the frames are capable of repair, this should normally be the way forward.

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

- 5.3.3 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...."

- 5.3.4 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.

- 5.3.5 Thermal upgrading of windows is considered in some detail. Historic England refers to recent research which has shown that by using secondary glazing with low emissivity coating, heat loss can be reduced by over 60%. It does not rule out the use of double-glazed windows in listed buildings but explains that conventional double-glazed units which are between 22 and 28mm thick, or slim profile double-glazed units which are between 10 and 16mm thick, differ from traditional glass which is normally between 2 and 3mm thick. It is acknowledged that 'slimline' 16mm double-glazed units will have less of a harmful visual impact when compared with 'conventional' 22-28mm double-glazing but this does not necessarily mean that this is acceptable.
- 5.3.6 The Listed Property Owners Club acknowledges the above Historic England guidance which specifically addresses the subject of thermal upgrading of windows and double glazing. It 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, Historic England 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.

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

- 5.3.7 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."

Impact on the listed building

- 5.3.8 The energy performance of listed buildings is at the forefront of several applications recently and this application is no exception. Similarities may be drawn between this application and other recent decisions made by NHC with respect to window replacements. Each case is, however, considered on its own merits.
- 5.3.9 In the supporting statement submitted for the Replacement of non original windows which are non historic fabric and detract from the overall character property. with Douglas fir cottage -pane windows and black ironmongery.

The proposed slimline double glazed units are considered to be appropriate and will introduce higher quality, better design and improve thermal performance.

There is no objection to this element of the application for the reasons state above.

5.3.10 The removal of a modern casement window within a modern extension with a new set of double doors is supported as there is no loss of historic fabric of significance. The work is also reversible should any re instatement be required in the future.

5.3.11 The proposed replacement of two rear garden-access doors with the replacement doors will be traditional timber units with **half-height cottage-pane glazing above and a solid stable-door style lower section**, providing a sympathetic and historically appropriate design that enhances the building's character.

This work is supported as it replaces non original doors with better quality and more appropriately designed doors.

5.3.13 The proposed installation of two vertical support pillars beneath each of the existing door canopies.

The existing canopies are modern and are supported by fixings in the façade which are failing, and this failure would cause harm to the listed structure. Therefore, the proposed vertical supports are supported as they would ensure the long term integrity of the of the listed building.

5.4 **Alternative Options**

5.4.1 None.

5.5 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

5.5.1 None applicable.

5.6 **Conclusion**

5.6.1 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 Holwell Conservation Area. The proposal, thereby, satisfies 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 (August 2026) 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**.

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.

Signed <i>S. Kasparian</i> Sarah Kasparian	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 17 September 2026	