

HERITAGE STATEMENT

94 RUSHBY MEAD, LETCHWORTH, HERTFORDSHIRE.

Confirmation of non invasive retrofit insulation works.



Picture 1 - Row of terraces representing the application, number 94 is the third gable roofed element of the building to the right of the picture.

My name is Jon Tankard and I am an Architect with RLP Surveyors based in Hitchin, I carry full ARB and RIBA qualifications, I am an experienced Principal Designer under the Building Safety Act and I hold qualifications as a Retrofit Assessor under PAS 2035 with the added qualification of Level 3 Award in Energy Efficiency for Older and Traditional Buildings.

The reasoning behind the Heritage Statement for the retrofitting of the properties is that the building falls within the Restrictions of North Herts Council that the building is within the Conservation Area, is Grade 2 Listed, and is overviewed by the Letchworth Garden Heritage Foundation.

The Conservation Area and Heritage Foundation restrictions generally deal with the aesthetic conclusions of the works that we are proposing and have directed the solutions so as to avoid conflict with these restrictions, therefore for the main part of this application, the afore mentioned restrictive requirements are not affected as the works have been arranged internally.

Therefore, Listed Building Consent is sought to show that the proposed retrofit improvements will not harm the historic structure of this Grade II listed building.

Historic England Listing.

The building is contained within a group listing as follows.

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1174703

Date first listed: 07-Sept-1979

List Entry Name: 86-144, RUSHBY MEAD

Statutory Address 1: 86-144, RUSHBY MEAD

RUSHBY MEAD 1. 5255 Nos 86 to 144 (even) TL 2232 9/126-152 II GV 2. 1911 by Bennett and Bidwell. Grouped workmen's cottages in 7 blocks of 2, 4 and 6. Built by the Howard Cottage Society Limited. The best of the early cottage layouts in which Bennett and Bidwell used their standard house types to particular advantage in an imaginative layout which exploits the picturesque quality of the street as advocated by Unwin in his then recently published 'Town Planning in Practise'. One and a half storeys. One and two windows each. Irregular design of facades varied by use of large gabled bays. Tile roofs with brick ridge stacks. Roughcast walls. Gabled dormer casements with weather-boarded gables. Two, three and four light mullioned casements with glazing bars; some first floor gable windows with tile labels extended to form strings. Recessed doorways with tile labels. The original paintwork specification of cream walls and windows, and green doors has been maintained throughout.

The submission and accompanying text would suggest that the character, layout and setting are the driving factors of the listing, the works as proposed would be non-invasive and will not have detrimental effect on the external appearance of the building or affect the internal layout.

The Requirement Of the Works.

First Garden Cities Homes is a social housing provider that regards warm, dry and secure housing as a basic human right. To continue meeting this commitment, it recognises the need to retrofit its existing housing stock, whilst ensuring that the historical context of these houses are retained.

Britain has some of the oldest housing stock in Europe, with roughly 38% built before 1946 and 20% built before 1919. These homes are inefficient primarily due to solid walls lacking cavities and a general lack of modern insulation. The buildings as built are of a 'leaky' structure with in built open fires and uninsulated suspended floors, this leads to cold draughty buildings with high energy costs. For winter comfort, 18 – 21 degrees Celsius is identified as a healthy internal temperature for most adults, however with the application of part and piecemeal retrofit interventions on a number of private and social housing providers, this has led in some cases to unbalanced properties with resulting cold and damp locations within the building structure, often revealing itself as mould on building surfaces, leading to, in some cases, fatal respiratory illnesses. A direct response to this was the requirement of Awaab's law in October 2025. However, a

recent report by Health Equals determined that 23% of people living in social housing, are still living with mould.

Heating a poorly insulated house costs more than double that of a well-insulated home. In social housing, lower utility bills reduce household stress and improve health and education. Benefits are clearly defined as –

- Lower Energy Costs: Good insulation cuts heating expenses by more than half.
- Less Stress: Families save money, which helps lower daily financial worry.
- Better Health: Warmer homes prevent illnesses caused by cold and damp air.
- Improved Education: Children study better in comfortable, warm spaces.

Therefore, the retrofit requirements of the property are essential in order for the structure to remain in use and relevant within today's living standards. We are therefore confirming the works retrofit to a standard that is sympathetic to the building's aesthetics and structural requirements of the 100 year old structure.

Assessment of significance.

The assessment of significance follows the requirements of PAS 2035 and BS 7913, of a formal evaluation required for traditional, protected, or historic buildings before any energy retrofit work begins. It identifies architectural, cultural, and historic value to ensure improvement measures do no harm to the structure or setting of the building.

The Existing Structure

Walls

Solid brick with external cement roughcast render and non-porous painted finish (may be a retro painted addition). Internal lime plaster applied directly to the internal brick face.



Picture 2 – Wall thickness demonstrated.

Ground floor

Suspended timber ground floor with ventilated void, sw timer joists supporting timber floorboards, metal air vent set between joists, sub ground appears dry.

Solid Ground Floor – set within entrance and kitchen area, unknown substrate with quarry tiled finish.



Picture 3, 4 and 5 – Floor Depth, front elevation damage air brick and clearly ventilated void. With



Picture 6, 7 and 7 – Juxtapose of differing floor finishes evidence of silver fish above solid floor construction and lack of air bricks evidenced to the rear elevation.

First Floor

All first floors are internal and will only require insulation to wall junctions to maintain wall insulation.

Roof.

Areas of open void and enclosed areas of low eaves. Roof currently unvented with 100mm of insulation between ceiling joists and 100mm over.



Picture 6 and 7 – Unventilated roof void, redundant positive air pump, and lowered eaves sections.

Ventilation

Currently all fireplaces are bricked up with some evidence of air vents, rare example trickle vents to the windows against requirements set by the Letchworth Garden Heritage Foundation. Extract ventilation is provided to all wet rooms as required by building control, the house was previously supplied air by a 'positive' air pressure system, which has ceased to be used, has not negatively affected the building and the building is currently ventilated by the use of trickle vents, opening windows and windows set on 'locked open' settings. Noted that window heights and ceiling heights result in 700mm of unvented volume to first floor ceiling areas.

Proposed Building Improvements (all works noted on 2564 SK 100).

Walls.

The intension will be to fit 2 layers rockwool insulation totalling 100mm thick, with outer layer plasterboard supported by MF frame. The wall solution is breathable and will allow moisture to move out if required.

Floor

Suspended Ground Floor, breather membrane laid atop the joists, 100mm rockwool laid between the joists with ventilated void maintained. All air vents to be repaired and where required installed, debris beneath the floor to be removed and 'spline' wall checked to ensure clear passage of air to maintain ventilation.

First floor, where underside of floor is exposed to external air, void between joists to be filled with rockwool insulation. Current floor is non ventilated.

All voids between walls and joists ill be insulated to maintain consistency of wall insulation, and first floor to be insulated min 100mm to match walls at abutment to external walls to avoid cold bridging.

Roof

Roof void to be ventilated, where we have lower eaves, eaves to be insulated as per wall with 100mm rockwool and plasterboard supported on MF system. Ceiling insulation to consist of 100mm rockwool; between ceiling joists with 200mm insulation laid across the joists with breather membrane atop.

Ventilation.

Current extract thru wet areas to be maintained, inclusion of trickle vents to be discussed with Conservation Officer, Letchworth Conservation and confirmed.

**** ALL INSULATION STRATEGIES CONFIRMED ON 2553 SK 100*.**

Conclusion.

All amendments and interventions as confirmed within this document and the above-named drawing are clearly noted as 'non – visible' and therefore do not require Planning Permission.

The works as confirmed do interact with the Listed Structure in a non-invasive way and all original materials are retained in place or refixed in the case of floorboards. The application is therefore for Listed Building Consent for the works as noted, which will be carried out to the requirements of PAS 2035, Level 3 Award in Energy Efficiency for Older and Traditional Buildings and BS 7913, are non-invasive and work in a way that compliments the existing building moisture, drying and ventilation strategy.

We therefore would look to North Herts District Council to approve this application.

If there are any concerns, we would be pleased if you could contact the undersigned on 07527 620842 to discuss in more detail.

Yours Faithfully

Jon Tankard BA Hons, Dip Arch RIBA