

THE LUTYENS TRUST

To protect and promote the spirit and substance of the work of Sir Edwin Lutyens OM

Shaun Greaves
North Herts Council
PO Box 10613
Nottingham NG6 6DW

6 October 2025

Dear Shaun/ North Herts Conservation

Comments on Listed Building Consent : Replacement of 9 existing timber frame windows with double glazed white flush timber casements, 190 Park Lane, Old Knebworth, Knebworth, Hertfordshire, SG3 6PS
Ref: 25/01893/LBC

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above.

Lutyens' Context and Background

In 1903 Lord Lytton, inspired by Letchworth, conceived the idea of a garden village, and in 1904 consulted his brother-in-law, Sir Edwin Lutyens, before turning to Pepler & Allen for a masterplan. Sites were being sold in 1908, but in 1910 Lytton returned to Lutyens, who produced a revised plan in association with Thomas Adams, consulting surveyor, who had previously worked at Letchworth. Work started formally in 1912, was interrupted by the First World War, and continued after it with A. & J. Soutar as consulting architects, following their work at Ruislip Manor and Hampstead Garden Suburb. There is little evidence of Lutyens's formal scheme, but he included in it his Neo-Georgian Golf Club House, 1908, on the northern edge of the village. A straight road led up to this (an effect now lost) with Beacon House, on its w side, built in 1912 for the golf club manager, joining up with the pre-existing lane that winds back down to the mainly c18 buildings of Deard's End Farm, Park Lane. Nos. 3 and 7 Deard's End Lane are also by Lutyens, the former 1912 but the latter designed in 1901 as a pair of cottages, soon converted to a single dwelling.

The Lutyens Trust is a vibrant amenity body founded in 1984 dedicated to protecting, promoting and celebrating the works of Sir Edwin and those influenced by him in spirit and substance.

Comments

Number 190 Old Park Lane is statutorily listed together with 188 Old Park Lane and lies within a conservation area. The proposal is to replace the nine existing flush timber casement windows with similar, but double glazed, windows by Anglian Home Improvements. The primary consideration is the extent to which the proposal would affect the special character of the listed building. The conservative approach would be to repair the existing joinery and install secondary glazing. This would be entirely reversible and would still provide a measure of thermal insulation, though it can suffer the nuisance of interstitial condensation.

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It might be argued that, where the impact on appearance is minimal and ancient fabric is not involved, double glazing might be acceptable.

However, in this case, the submitted information is insufficient to show how closely the proposed windows respect Lutyens's often quite distinctive detail. Whilst the joinery is, properly, to be of timber with casements set flush in the frames, there are still concerns that need to be addressed:

1. We would expect to see comparative existing and proposed joinery sections at a scale of 1:5 to demonstrate that the proposal accurately reflects the original detail. Particularly important would be: the internal glazing bar profile, convincing simulation of external putty glazing, and better concealment of trickle vents.
2. The submission appears to show 24mm sealed units. The significance of the building, with its subtle Arts & Crafts design, requires something less obtrusive. Appropriate slimline sealed units should be no more than 14mm (4:6:4).
3. Existing window ironmongery needs to be assessed and, if of heritage significance, retained for reuse.

We note that the existing dining room window, together with its replacement, is shown with a top hung vent. This is not a detail characteristic of Lutyens (except above substantial full width transoms). The existing window might be assessed for evidence of later modification/replacement. In any case, it is not a detail we would recommend to be retained.

If replacement is permitted, the applicant should offer an original window to the Brooking collection of architectural detail:

thebrooking.org.uk

enquire@thebrooking.org.uk

Loss of the original, rather than repair, is to be regretted. You may conclude that, in principle, the need for double glazing is justified. However, the detail of the present proposal fails to respect the character and appearance of the listed building and is not acceptable.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Deborah Mays
Pp The Lutyens Trust Architectural Advisers