

CONSERVATION TEAM CONSULTATION APPLICATION RESPONSE

APPLICATION REF:	26/00926/FPH
CASE OFFICER:	TK
APPLICATION SITE:	10 Midland Cottages, Nightingale Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG5 1RW
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Part two storey and part single storey rear extension following demolition of existing rear extension and detached store. Installation of front hardstanding.

RECOMMENDATION:

I raise **NO OBJECTION** on the basis that the proposal will not harm the BLI or harm the character or appearance of the Hitchin Railway and Ransoms Recreation Ground Conservation Area, thereby satisfying the provisions of Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF and the aims of Policy HE1 of North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

SITE CONTEXT:

Midland Cottages are Buildings of Local Interest and are in the Hitchin Railway and Ransoms Recreation Ground Conservation Area (26 July 2011) – hereafter referred to as HRRRGCA. Midland Cottages are therefore Non-designated Heritage Assets located within a Designated Heritage Asset for the purpose of applying the aims of Section of the NPPF and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.



The following is noted in the Conservation Area Character Statement:

6.4 Ages, styles, materials and details

*All of the buildings in the Conservation Area date to after 1850, when the first railway line was built through Hitchin. This led to the provision of the first (now mainly demolished) railway station and also the addition of housing for railway workers, namely Station Terrace, built in c.1850. Formerly known as Great Northern Cottages, this row of six terraced houses is two storeys high, with a cream painted stucco finish and a shallow pitched slated roof. Some of the original six-over-six sashes remain. **More buildings followed shortly afterwards when the Midland Railway line was added, most notably the addition of paired and terraced houses facing over what was to become Ransom's Recreation Ground. These properties date to c1857 and are now known as Nos. 1-6, 7a and 8-12 Midland Cottages (No. 7 is a modern addition to the terrace, with matching details), and they were originally arranged as a short terrace of six with three pairs of cottages to the south. They are two storeys high and are constructed using white brick with red***

brick arches to the casement windows, many of which are original. Their most notable feature is the long line of gables which face the open green space. Some original lean-to porches remain, attached to the front elevation. Most of the roofs in the terraced group have been reroofed in concrete tiles, but to the south, the paired groups largely retain their original Welsh slate roofs. In 2009 a new pair of almost matching cottages was built on the site of a modern building, and more development, of similar details but greater in scale, has also been inserted closer to the entrance from Nightingale Road.

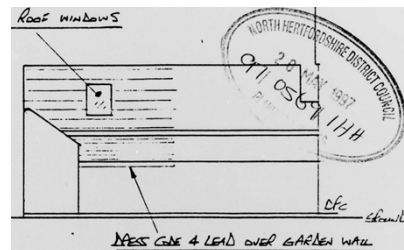
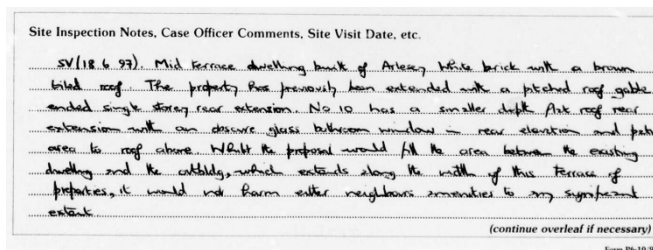


Nos.1-6, 7a and 8-12 Midland Cottages (no.7 is a more recent dwelling and what was originally no.7 is now no.7a)	Nightingale Road	Attractive row of twelve mid nineteenth century terraced and semi detached cottages, some extended, in white brick with red detailing and some original slate roofs; built c 1857 for railway staff in conjunction with the arrival of the Midland Railway. They form both a group and focal point when viewed across Ransom's Recreation Ground. Although no.7 is a recent addition it still makes a positive contribution to the group.	
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The following applications are relevant to the consideration of this application:

9 Midland Cottages

97/00569/1HH - Single storey rear extension. The case officer wrote:



7 Midland Cottages

05/00272/1 - Part single, part first floor rear extensions and subdivision of number 7 Midland Cottages to create two self-contained dwellings (as amended by plan received 22nd April 2005). The case officer wrote:

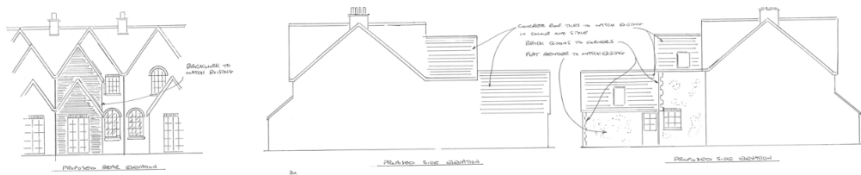
7 Midland Cottages is an end of terrace property (No's 7&12 inclusive) accessed via a narrow lane off Nightingale Road. The property's rear garden is separated into two sections via a brick wall which is approximately over 2.5m in height. The property adjoins No.8 which is the subject of a current similar application. No.6 is the left hand half of pair of semi-detached properties, the flank wall of which is some 7m from the site boundary of the application property, and some 16m from the main side wall of the dwelling.



8 Midland Cottages

05/00273/1HH - Single and two storey rear extension. The case officer wrote:

8 Midland Cottages is part of a terraced row of properties accessed via a narrow lane off Nightingale Road. The property's rear garden is separated into two sections via a brick wall which is approximately over 2.5m in height. The adjoining terrace No.9 has an existing single storey rear extension extending approximately 5m at a distance of approximately 1m from the common side boundary with No.8.

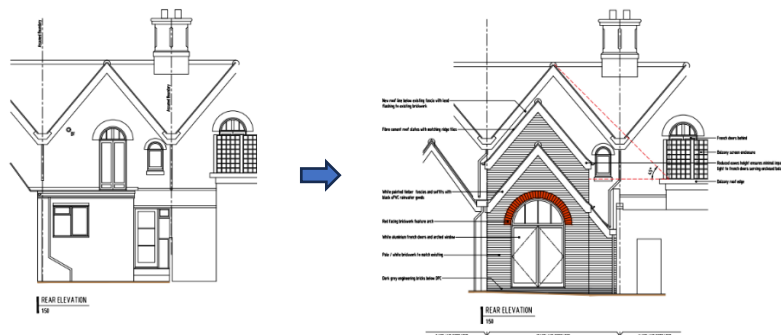


DETAILED ANALYSIS AND CONSIDERATIONS:

As noted above, what is proposed at no.10 is like that proposed (and importantly) implemented at no.8 at the same terrace. On the first page of the submitted Design and Access Statement the aerial image below illustrates changes to the rear of this terrace.



It would therefore be unreasonable to conclude that the current proposal would occasion harm either to no.10, or the terrace overall or to the character or appearance of the HRRRGCA.



The submitted DAS addresses materials as follows and there is a case to suggest a brickwork condition would be appropriate:

High quality materials have been selected to match existing or offer improvement preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the area. Brickwork is proposed as matching pale /

white over dark grey plinth with red arch feature, roof to be fibre cement slates to replicate the original slate roof finish. Existing windows retained to be refurbished and decorated white with the new double doors proposed as white aluminium. The current original timber front door is to be refurbished and decorated sympathetically

I note that fibre cement slate is proposed, Whilst ideally I would like to have seen natural slate used, there is a mix of roof materials on this terrace and considering its unlisted status and that the works are to the rear, I do not consider there to be a justifiable case to insist upon natural slate.

Suggested bespoke conditions

1. Prior to the commencement of development, details or samples of the brick type(s) for the rear extensions shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the brickwork shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved brick type(s).

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to the character of the area under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.

HERITAGE POLICY ASSESSMENT:

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:
Section 72(1)

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031:
Policy HE1

NPPF (December 2024):

The following paragraphs are relevant:

- **135 c)** (*sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment*),
- **207** (*local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting*)
- **210** (*desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*),
- **212** (*great weight should be given to the asset's conservation*),
- **213** (*clear and convincing justification*), and
- **215** (*harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use*).

CONCLUSION:

I find this proposal **UNOBJECTIONABLE**.

OFFICER: Mark Simmons

DATE: 17/07/2026