

CONSERVATION TEAM CONSULTATION APPLICATION RESPONSE

APPLICATION REF:	25/01333/FP
CASE OFFICER:	HT
APPLICATION SITE:	27 - 29 Whitehorse Street, Baldock, Herts SG7 6QF
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Change of use of former first floor office into residential, including internal alterations to form first floor residential unit and to facilitate relocation of retail ancillary space to ground floor. Demolition of external stair enclosure and reinstate external wall on original alignment. Replacement windows. New external doors.

RECOMMENDATION:
I raise **NO OBJECTION** on the basis that the proposal will not occasion harm either to the listed building or to the Baldock Conservation Area (BCA), satisfying the provisions of Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

SHORT SUMMARY:

Impact on listed building's special character and its setting

Impact will be positive so long as window detailing, in particular, is well-handled and discussions are on-going on an outstanding DOC.

Impact on character and appearance of the conservation area –

Impact will be positive so long as window detailing, in particular, is well-handled and discussions are on-going on an outstanding DOC.

Harm, preserve or enhance.

The proposal will enhance the building's appearance and the appearance of the BCA.

SITE CONTEXT:

Nos.27 and 29 Whitehorse Street are grade II listed and are located in the BCA. The building and area are Designated Heritage Assets for the purpose of applying the aims of Section 16 the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The list entry can be found at the following link:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1175770?section=official-list-entry>

DETAILED ANALYSIS AND CONSIDERATIONS:

The following is noted at 2.1 of the submitted Design & Access Statement:

This application already has LBC for the works proposed, under application 24/00202/LBC, and revision of 21/01606/LBC. Formally, a FULL application is also required for the change of use, which seems to have been missed under the original 21/01606/LBC application stage. This application therefore seeks full planning permission for those works, including the change of use of the first floor commercial to residential.

Further on, the DAS says:

2.2. Externals

There are generally no external changes between this application and the existing LBC permission. These external changes involve new window openings and general repair / remedial work, as well as the removal of the external stair enclosure to the rear.

The existing flat roof over the proposed bathroom is to be insulated externally, to avoid reducing head room, which will result in a marginal increase in height externally. This is hidden to the rear of the site and would not be perceivable.

It is generally thought that the roof finish will have to be removed temporarily to allow installation of a breather membrane and insulation, before re-installation, although the original tiles or reclaimed matches will be used, if required.

A new external soil vent pipe is also proposed, to serve the new kitchen location. This is proposed in black painted cast iron and would be positioned behind the side chimney stack and therefore be largely hidden from the street scene.

The external windows to the first floor are to be changed to Victorian-style windows, already approved under the LBC.

2.3. Internals

The first-floor space is reconfigured, requiring new partition walls being to form access around bedroom 2 and the bathroom at first floor level, and to form a tea point and WC to the ground floor.

The existing chimney structure to the ground floor is also to be removed, as is serving no purpose now the elements above are to be removed.

The ethos internally is to remove any modern or unsympathetic materials (hardboard and insulated plasterboards) and replace with woodfibre insulation and breathable lime plaster. This is not only sympathetic of a listed historic building structure but will also allow it to breathe naturally.

Floor levels to the first floor area vary, and whilst the original aim was to form a level floor throughout, exploratory work has uncovered issues with this. Steps between spaces must therefore be retained. Floors will still be lifted, however, to allow structural strengthening and the installation of fire separation and acoustic treatments. Historic floorboards will be retained and re-laid as a finished floor treatment where feasible.

Looking at the plan submissions for refs: 24/00202/LBC & 25/01333/FP they are practically the same:

24/00202/LBC

P100 - Location Plan
P001 - Existing Floor and Roof Plan
P002 - Existing Elevations and Section

22157_PL02_Proposed Ground Floor Plan
22157_PL03_Proposed First Floor Plan
22157_PL04_Proposed Roof Plan
22157_PL05_Proposed Front Elevation
22157_PL06_Proposed Side Elevation
22157_PL07_Proposed Rear Elevation
22157_Design and Access Statement

25/01333/FP

Location Plan
2729WS_R - Existing Roof Plan
2729WS_G - Existing Ground Floor / Site Plan
2729WS_E - Existing Elevations Plan
2729WS_1 - Existing First Floor Plan

22157_PL02_Proposed Ground Floor Plan
22157_PL03_Proposed First Floor Plan
22157_PL04_Proposed Roof Plan
22157_PL05_Proposed Front Elevation
22157_PL06_Proposed Side Elevation
22157_PL07_Proposed Rear Elevation
22157_Design and Access Statement

HERITAGE POLICY ASSESSMENT:

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:
Sections 66(1) and 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:

In short, heritage matters are addressed under ref: 24/00202/LBC and I am currently handling 3no. DOC applications pursuant to that LBC under refs: 25/01261/DOC (Condition 2 - External re-rendering), 25/01368/DOC (Condition 3 - window sections) and 25/01369/DOC (Condition 4 - wall and ceiling finishes).

This proposal is unobjectionable.

OFFICER: Mark Simmons

DATE: 27/06/2025