

Heritage & Conservation

Application consultation response

Application reference:	25/00696/FPH (revised comments since receiving Heritage Impact Statement)
Site:	Standalone Farmhouse Wilbury Road Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 4JN
Proposal	Installation of gas tank and fence enclosure.
Action required prior to determination:	Yes (see below)

Summary

There are no objections in principle (informal guidance at present) to the proposal so long as the hit and miss fencing is screened. This assessment is based on lack of a heritage assessment and given informally as guidance at this stage. I suggest that a short heritage impact assessment is submitted to allow a better understanding of the proposal and to comply with policy. Once that is received and reviewed I anticipate no extensive delays before a formal decision is made.

A heritage impact assessment has now been received.

Revised summary comments as follows

Since the receipt of the heritage impact assessment which gives a much improved understanding of the impact on the setting of the listed building and I would have no objections to the proposal based on the fact that it is well distanced from the listed building. The proposed close board fencing is sufficiently screened from view with hedging as to no cause harm to the setting.

Heritage Assets

Listed Building

Discussion

The proposal is within the setting of the listed building is not an attractive addition. A heritage statement has been submitted to assess impact on the setting of this listed building and this provides a better understanding on the impact this proposal would have on the asset.

The proposed structure is not an attractive addition to the setting of the farmstead, but the use of screening will help mitigate any harm cause to the setting of the listed building and it surrounds.

The proposal is now considered to be supportable for the reasons stated in the summary section above and would not cause harm to the setting of the listed building.

Heritage Policy Assessment

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 26H of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act

1990 or Sections 16 (1) & 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and as supported by the aims of the NPPF.

The Local Plan and NPPF

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 and the policies contained within it i.e., Policy HE1. The plan was adopted November 2022.

The relevant paragraph numbers at Section 16 of the July 2021 version of the NPPF have been changed as follows:

197. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.*
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

199. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

200. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.....

202. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

206. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition) – December 2017

At para 14 under the sub-heading 'Landscape Assessment and Amenity' it states that "*Analysis of setting is different from landscape assessment. While landscapes include everything within them, the entirety of very extensive settings may not contribute equally to the significance of a heritage asset, if at all. **Careful analysis is therefore required to assess whether one heritage asset at a considerable distance from another, though intervisible with it – a church spire, for instance – is a major component of the setting, rather than just an incidental element within the wider landscape.***"

At para 17 it states (my emphasis in bold): "*All heritage assets have significance, some of which have particular significance and are designated. The contribution made by their setting to their significance also varies. **Although many settings may be enhanced by development, not all settings have the same capacity to accommodate change without harm to the significance of the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate it.** This capacity may vary between designated assets of the same grade or of the same type or according to the nature of the change. It can also depend on the location of the asset: an elevated or overlooked location; a riverbank, coastal or island location; or a location within an extensive tract of flat land may increase the sensitivity of the setting (i.e. the capacity of the setting to accommodate change without harm to the heritage asset's significance) or of views of the asset. This requires the implications of development affecting the setting of heritage assets to be considered on a case-by-case basis.*"

Conclusion

The proposals would preserve the architectural and/or historic interest of the listed building and therefore complies with sections 16 (1) of the Act.

There is/are **NO OBJECTION/S**. The scheme will satisfy the provisions of Sections 16(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

From	Tricia Craggs
Date	20.5.2025 (revised)