

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Mark Simmons.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/01615/LBC	Replacement of all windows with hardwood timber and double glazing and replacement of 2 doors (as amended by drawing entitled Proposed Front and Side Facing Ground Floor Single Window and as amplified by amended photos all received on 30.09.2025)	48 Ridge Road Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 1PN

Submitted Plan Nos

Location plan Proposed front ground floor double window Proposed front ground floor obscured triple window Proposed side entrance door with side light window Proposed first floor side bay window Proposed rear ground floor double window proposed rear first floor triple window Proposed rear stable door Proposed rear ground floor triple window Proposed window sections Front ground floor 4 pane single window Proposed Front First Floor Double Window Proposed Front First Floor Dormer Window

1.0 Policies

HE1 Designated heritage assets

SECN16 Conserve + enhance historic environment

2.0 Site History

2.1 **00/01076/1LB** – Part demolition of front wall and renovation
CCON 11.09.2000

00/01924/1LB – Alteration to front entrance porch, replacement windows and internal alterations and repairs
CCON 20.02/2001

3.0 Policies

3.1 Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031 is relevant as are the following paragraphs of Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2024):

- ☐ **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*).

4.0 Representations

4.1 **Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation** – See below.

We comment that after reviewing the original plans for the property, we note that all the ground floor square windows measuring 530mm / 600mm should have glazing bars (located at front porch as well as the single ground floor side window).

The current application has 4 windows open glazed that should have glazing bars. 2 of these windows can be noted on the original plans with glazing bars and 2 are later additions, but of the same size, and should match the originals.

Press & site notices – No comments received.

5.0 **Planning Considerations**

5.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 5.1.1 Nos. 2 - 122 (evens) Ridge Road, Letchworth Garden City are grade II listed and are located within the Letchworth Conservation Area (LCA). The building and the LCA are designated heritage assets and the list entry for these properties reads as follows:

RIDGE ROAD 1. 5255 Birds Hill Estate Nos 2 to 122 (even) TL 2232 9/102-114 II GV 2.

1906 by B Parker and R Unwin. This pioneer estate was designed for the Garden City Tenants Limited and comprises 13 grouped terraces forming a cul-de-sac and village green layout. One and a half storeys. Mostly one window each with irregular frontages varied by arrangements of large and small dormers and gables. Tiled roofs with multi-form brick stacks. The centre feature of the village green layout is a giant gable taking up Nos 100 and 102. Roughcast walls. Mullioned casement windows with tile labels and glazing bars (some windows altered). Recessed entrances with arched doorways. Included as the earliest estate layout of its type, and the prototype of all future council house developments in the country. The concept of a village green layout was put forward in 1898/9 and published by Parker and Unwin in "The Art of Building a House". The Westholm scheme (qv) was also based on this idea.

5.2 **Proposal**

- 5.2.1 The application is described as: ***Replacement of all windows with hardwood timber and double glazing and replacement of 2 doors.***
- 5.2.2 The HE guidance below describes that assessing the significance of a window and understanding the contribution it makes to the significance of the building is the key first step in deciding the correct approach to any alterations or upgrading. Where historic fenestration survives, HE explains that it is often an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved and repaired wherever possible. It describes how to determine the architectural and historic significance of windows so that decisions about altering them can be made in an informed way.

Historic England guidance entitled 'Traditional Windows: their care, repair and upgrading' published in 2017.

- 5.2.3 At page 6 of this guidance it states:

"The pressures that threaten traditional windows come from many different sources. Probably the most significant of these is the replacement window industry that relies on PVC-u windows for almost all of its business. The industry has invested heavily in marketing over a long period and as a result has persuaded many homeowners that their old timber windows are rotten, draughty, and beyond economic repair, whereas in most cases minor repairs and some upgrading would have allowed them to remain fit for purpose and serviceable for years to come.

Replacement plastic (PVC-u) windows pose one the greatest threats to the heritage value of historic areas, particularly in towns and villages. Despite attempts at improving the design of these windows they are instantly recognisable because they cannot match the sections and proportions of historic joinery.....”

5.2.4 At page 54 of this guidance it states:

“If used in multi-paned windows, IGUs will generally be less efficient than secondary glazing since even the most efficient units will not overcome thermal bridging through the frame and glazing bars.....”

5.2.5 Further on, Historic England’s general approach to the alteration or replacement of windows is set out below:

1. Where historic windows, whether original or later insertions, make a positive contribution to the significance of a listed building they should be retained and repaired where possible. If beyond repair, they should be replaced with accurate copies.

2. Where historic windows have already been replaced with windows whose design follows historic patterns, these usually make a positive contribution to the significance of listed buildings. When they do, They should therefore be retained and repaired where possible. If beyond repair, they should be replaced with accurate copies.

3. Where historic windows or replacement windows of historic pattern survive without historic glass it may be possible to introduce slim-profile double-glazing without harming the significance of the listed building. There are compatibility issues to consider as the introduction of double-glazing can require the renewal of the window frame to accommodate thicker glazing, thereby harming significance. These issues are covered in Section 4 of this guidance.

4. Where historic windows have been replaced with ones whose design does not follow historic patterns, these are unlikely to contribute to the significance of listed buildings. Replacing such windows with new windows of a sympathetic historic pattern, whether single-glazed or incorporating slim-profile double-glazing, may cause no additional harm. It also provides an opportunity to enhance the significance of the building, which is the desired outcome under national policy.

5. Where a new window or re-glazing is agreed, the reflective properties of secondary and double-glazing as compared to modern, polished single-glazing, do not usually harm the significance of the building. But when new multi-paned windows are proposed, the desirability of reproducing broken reflections by individually glazing each pane should be considered. Where the aesthetic value of the building is high, then the impact on the whole of the relevant elevation should be considered, including the desirability of accurately matching other windows.

Guidance on Alterations to Listed Buildings **IHBC Toolbox Guidance Note GN2021/1 - January 2021**

5.2.6 At 4.3.4 it states:

“Proposals to double-glaze existing windows are often inappropriate as well as having a surprisingly high carbon impact and a short lifespan. Thicker glazing units require glazing bars to be modified to accommodate them and the window will then have a very different appearance.”

Whilst at 4.3.5 it states:

“Applied glazing bars to the surface of windows or sandwiched between panes of double-glazing are generally inappropriate. Secondary glazing may be acceptable subject to careful location of the framing elements so as not to be disruptive to the visual appearance when seen from the exterior.”

5.3 Key Issues

5.3.1 The key issues are to consider the impact of the placement windows upon the listed building’s special character and on the character and appearance of the Letchworth Conservation Area.

5.3.2 The existing windows are manufactured in timber and are single-glazed and make a positive contribution to the building’s special character. The submitted Heritage Statement addresses the building’s Statement of Significance as follows:

- ☐ *The significance of 48 Ridge Road lies in:*
- ☐ *Its architectural character as part of the Parker & Unwin design*
- ☐ *Its role within the earliest Garden City layout*
- ☐ *Its contribution to the visual coherence and social concept of the estate*
- ☐ *Surviving original features such as timber joinery, window proportions, and doorway surrounds*

The building is protected for its group value, and any changes must preserve the external form, materials, and detailing that contribute to the overall character.

5.3.3 Under Section 4 of the HS entitled ‘Description of Proposed Works’ it states:

The proposal is to replace all existing windows and external doors with like-for-like timber units, due to deterioration of the original materials and to improve the thermal/energy efficiency of the property by utilising specialist heritage grade slimline double glazing. The new joinery will be:

- ☐ *Constructed from high-quality, durable hardwood or softwood (e.g. Accoya or similar, depending on local approval)*
- ☐ *Replicating existing dimensions, profiles, and opening mechanisms*
- ☐ *Painted in a heritage-appropriate finish (e.g. white sashes, black frames, if agreed)*
- ☐ *Fitted into existing openings, with no enlargement or repositioning.*

Where possible, original ironmongery and detailing will be retained and reused. Any double glazing will be slimline heritage glass (if permitted), set within traditional profiles.

5.3.4 An inventory of windows for this range of listed buildings was compiled in June 1999 but unfortunately a copy of which cannot be found. Furthermore, it is understood that a ‘moratorium amnesty’ on unauthorised replacement windows on listed properties at Ridge Road before 1st October 2005 was imposed at that time. This does not, however, apply to the windows at no.48.

5.3.5 This is a well-detailed proposal indicating appropriate joinery sections and importantly, showing split transoms to match standard transoms of full-height, side-hung casements alongside. It is important that there is no deviation in transom widths. It is noted that 16mm slimline dgu’s are proposed with 21mm wide glazing bars.

5.3.6 Considering LGCHF’s response that “... *The current application has 4 windows open glazed that should have glazing bars. 2 of these windows can be noted on the original*

plans with glazing bars and 2 are later additions, but of the same size, and should match the originals”, amended drawings have been requested and drawing was received on 30 September indicating that windows WG3, WG4, DG2 sidelight, WG6 and WG8 are to receive quarter-pane casements.

5.4 **Alternative Options**

5.4.1 Nonapplicable.

5.5 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

5.5.1 Nonapplicable.

5.6 **Conclusion**

5.6.1 It is considered that the proposal will neither occasion harm to the listed building's special character or to the appearance of the Letchworth Conservation Area. The proposal will satisfy the provisions of Sections 16(2) & 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 the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 I recommend that listed building consent be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The work to which this consent relates shall be begun by not later than the expiration of the period of 3 years from the date of this notice.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Notwithstanding drawing entitled 'Proposed side facing entrance door and frame with attached side light window' received on 11 July 2025, the side light to DG2 shall be a quarter-pane casement as noted on drawing entitled 'Proposed front and side facing ground floor single window' received on 30 September 2025 unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this listed building under Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

3. Where split transoms are indicated alongside horizontal mid rails (as for instance noted on drawing entitled 'Proposed rear facing 1st floor triple window'), both shall be 70mm in width unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this listed building under Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

4. All new windows shall receive 16mm heritage double-glazed units and where the new windows have glazing bars these shall be 21mm wide through bars as detailed on approved drawing entitled 'Proposed window sections' received on 11 July 2025 unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this listed building under Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan.

Signed  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 1 October 2025	