

Heritage Statement

Site Address: 1 John Street, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 9BE

Proposal: Change of use of existing offices into 6-bed HMO (Class C4)

Application Reference: 25/02331/LBC and 25/02330/FP

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of the application for Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for the proposed change of use of 1 John Street, Royston, from offices (Class E) into a 6-bed House in Multiple Occupation (Class C4).

The statement identifies the heritage significance of the property, sets out the legislative and policy context, and assesses the impact of the proposed works on the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

2. Legislative and Policy Context

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Sections 16 and 66: Requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the listed building and its setting.
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023), Sections 189–202: Requires applicants to describe the significance of heritage assets and assess the impact of proposed development.
- Local Planning Policy: North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011–2031), policies relating to heritage conservation and the historic environment.

3. Listing Description

List Entry Number: 1174570

Grade: II

Date First Listed: 11 June 1976

Statutory Address: 1 John Street, Royston, Hertfordshire

National Grid Reference: TL 35641 40620

Historic England List Description:

Earlier 19th century. Whitewashed brick. Hipped Welsh slated roof with eaves cornice. 3 storeys. 3 sash windows with glazing bars in reveals under flat arches. Wide ground floor windows. Convex quadrant windows on left side on 1st and 2nd floors. 2 chimneystacks with gault brick octagonal joined shafts. Nos 1 and 2 form a group with Nos 2 to 32 (even) and No 26A, High Street.

4. Significance Assessment

The significance of the property derives from:

- Architectural Interest: An intact example of early 19th century domestic/commercial architecture with distinctive features including sash windows, convex quadrant windows, and original chimney stacks.
- Historic Interest: Reflects the early 19th-century expansion of Royston's town centre.
- Group Value: Forms part of a wider group of listed buildings along John Street and the High Street, contributing to the historic streetscape.

5. Proposed Works

The application seeks consent for:

- Change of use from offices (Class E) to a 6-bed HMO (Class C4).
- Internal works to reconfigure the layout into six bedrooms with associated kitchen and bathroom facilities.
- Compliance works including fire safety upgrades in line with Building Regulations.
- No alterations are proposed to the principal external fabric or elevation of the listed building.

6. Impact Assessment

- External Fabric: No alterations proposed; the external appearance, roofscape, and frontage will remain unchanged.
- Internal Fabric: Alterations will be limited to non-structural partitions, services, and finishes. Care will be taken to minimise disturbance to any historic features.
- Setting: The proposed use does not alter the building's contribution to the street scene or its group value with adjoining listed buildings.
- Significance: The proposals result in negligible harm to heritage significance and ensure the building remains in viable, long-term use.

7. Justification

The proposed change of use will secure the building's sustainable future through active occupation. A sensitive approach to internal reconfiguration ensures that its heritage significance will be preserved. In heritage terms, the proposal constitutes sustainable development consistent with the NPPF, the statutory duty under the 1990 Act, and relevant local plan policies.

8. Conclusion

The proposed change of use of 1 John Street, Royston, to a 6-bed HMO (Class C4):

- Preserves the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building.
- Causes no harm to its significance or setting.
- Supports the long-term viable use of the heritage asset.

Accordingly, the proposals are considered acceptable in heritage terms, and consent should be granted.