

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/01303/LBC	Replacement windows to rear elevation (as amended by drawing nos. 9608_1 V13-Item 1; - Item 2; - Item 3; - Item 4 and - Item 5 received on 25/09/2024 and revised Proposed Rear Elevation received on 02/10/2024).	14 Ridge Road Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 1PN

Submitted Plan Nos

Proposed Rear Elevation 9608_1 V13-Item 1 9608_1 V13-Item 2 9608_1 V13-Item 3 9608_1 V13-Item
4 9608_1 V13-Item 5 Location Plan Existing Rear Elevation

1.0 Policies

HE1 Designated heritage assets

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 None relevant.

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:

- **200** (local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting)
- **203** (desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness),
- **205** (great weight should be given to the asset's conservation),
- **206** (clear and convincing justification), and
- **208** (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** – No comments received.

Press & site notices – No comments received.

5.0 **Planning Considerations**

5.1 **Site & Surroundings**

5.1.1 Nos. 2 – 122 (evens only) Ridge Road are grade II listed and are located within the Letchworth Conservation Area. The list entry reads as follows:

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 proposal is '**Replacement windows to rear elevation (as amended by drawing nos. 9608_1 V13-Item 1; - Item 2; - Item 3; - Item 4 and - Item 5 received on 25/09/2024 and revised Proposed Rear Elevation received on 02/10/2024)**'.

5.3 Key Issues

- 5.3.1 The key issue here is to consider the impact of this proposal on the special character of this grade II listed building and upon the character or appearance of the Letchworth Conservation Area. With reference to Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the following should be noted: *"In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special interest or historic interest which it possesses"*.
- 5.3.2 Of the 13 grouped terraces, the fenestration of 11 of these are defined by windows having wide transoms and split-transom bars with no narrower glazing bars. There have already been some changes to windows in the terrace nos. 10 – 16 including a combination of narrow glazing bar and overly wide split transom detail which fails to respect the listed building's special character as noted at no.12.
- 5.3.3 Timber Windows quotation ref: 9608/1 V7 relates to 6 windows and includes windows of a similar design to that at no.12:
- ☐ **Window 1** – Bedroom 3 Rear – a three-light window with narrow glazing bars to side-hung casements either side of an overly wide split-transom.
 - ☐ **Window 2** – Landing Rear – two-light window with narrow glazing bar to side-hung casement and an overly wide split-transom.
 - ☐ **Window 3** – Kitchen Rear - two-light window with narrow glazing bar to side-hung casement and an overly wide split-transom.
 - ☐ **Window 4** – Utility Rear - an overly wide split-transom.
 - ☐ **Window 5** – Utility Rear - two-light window with narrow glazing bar to side-hung casement and an overly wide split-transom.
 - ☐ **Window 6** – WC Rear – quarter-pane, side hung casement.
- 5.3.4 Windows 1, 3, 4 and 5 are poor quality later installations, Window 2 may be original but is in very poor condition and Window 6 is in satisfactory condition. Several of these windows are non-original, not particularly well-detailed and do not possess special interest, thus, their removal would not harm the building's special character.
- 5.3.5 A key question is whether to accept replacement windows with or without split transoms? Whilst the Local Planning Authority is aware that some joinery firms can manufacture windows with split transoms, it is not able to insist upon this. On this occasion, Timber Windows are not able to manufacture to this specification, but drawings have been amended for Windows 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 indicating transoms of equal width (86mm). Window 6 is to remain as per Timber Windows quotation ref: 9608/1 V7.
- 5.3.6 The amended drawings show windows that would restore the original window patterns in the existing openings with appropriate transom widths with the only concession being

that split transoms are not shown, so the historical method of opening for some windows would not be recreated. The Ridge Road estate has suffered more than any other listed buildings in the Garden City from loss of original windows. This proposal to reinstate the window pattern for no.14 will positively assist in restoring the character and appearance of the individual cottage and, most importantly, the harmony and design of the architectural concept for the whole estate. By doing this, the character and appearance of the conservation area will also be improved ensuring its proper preservation.

- 5.3.7 On the basis that the applicant's chosen window provider (Timber Windows) cannot manufacture an appropriate split-transom detail, the applicant has been encouraged to consider an alternative window manufacturer. However, the applicant intends keeping to their preferred provider.
- 5.3.8 It must be stressed that each case is considered on its own merits and that had this property retained its original split-transom windows (only Window 2) then this Authority would have sought similarly designed replacements windows if the originals were considered to be beyond repair. If original windows had existed and were not considered to be beyond repair the applicant would have been encouraged to consider secondary glazing if seeking to improve the property's thermal performance.

5.4 **Alternative Options**

- 5.4.1 None applicable.

5.5 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 5.5.1 None applicable.

5.6 **Conclusion**

- 5.6.1 Notwithstanding the lack of split-transoms, it is considered that the amended window design would: i) preserve and indeed enhance the appearance of this listed building; ii) improve the terrace overall of which no.14 forms part (nos.10-16 evens) and indeed maintain the special character of this seminal development overall (incl. Birds Hill) and iii) enhance the appearance of the Letchworth Conservation Area.
- 5.6.2 The proposed windows would satisfy the provisions of Sections 16(2) and 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 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. With the exception of the rear WC window which shall be manufactured in accordance with details on page 12 of the Timber Windows quote ref: 9608/1 V7 received on 14 June 2024 with 'through' glazing bars, all 5no. other replacement windows shall be manufactured in accordance with the approved drawings received on 25 September 2024 unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the windows shall be installed in accordance with the approved details.

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

3. All new windows shall be manufactured in timber and externally white-painted and with no trickle-vents 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 the grade II 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: 8 October 2024	