

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Tricia Craggs.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/01804/LBC	Replace existing timber double-glazed windows with timber double-glazed windows, some with a variation in the method of opening (as amended by plans received on 12/11/2024).	28 Ridge Road Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 1PN

Submitted Plan Nos

Location Plan Floor Plans South West (Side) North West and North East Front 11696-1 V6 Window 1 D
Upstairs Front 11696-1 V6 Section Drawings 2 Window E Upper Front and Window C Lower Front
11696-1 V6 Sections Drawings 3 Window F and G Upper Rear 11696-1 V6 Section Drawings 4 Window A
Lower Side 11696-1 V6 Section Drawings 5 Lower Bay Window (Facets T-V) 11696-1 V6 Section
Drawings 6 Lower Bay Window

1.0 Policies

HE1 Designated heritage assets

SECN16 Conserve + enhance historic environment

2.0 Site History

2.1 Full history can be viewed on file, but the following is offered below:

13/01395/1HH – Insertion of 1 roof light in rear roof slope; 2 roof lights in side roof slope and insertion of a second-floor window in existing front and rear elevations to facilitate conversion of loft space into habitable accommodation (as amended by plans received 24 July 2013).

CP 07.08.2013

13/01396/1LB – External alterations including insertion of 1 roof light in rear roof slope; 2 roof lights in side roof slope and insertion of a second-floor window in existing front and rear elevations. Rebuild external rear chimney following removal of existing chimney. Replace external finish of existing dormer window with white pebble dash. Internal alterations involving insertion of new staircase between first floor and loft space (as amended by plans received 24 July 2013).

CCON 07.08.2013

16/01944/1HH – Single storey rear extension, replacement garage, shed, hardstanding and front boundary fence and piers.

CP 25.01.2017

16/01945/1LB – Single storey rear extension following part removal of external wall, internal alterations and replacement garage.

CCON 25.01.2017

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 ***'Replace existing timber double-gazed windows with timber double-glazed windows, some with a variation in the method of opening (as amended by plans received on 12/11/2024).'***

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 of which no. 28 forms part, with the windows on the front elevation of no.32 having a significant adverse impact upon the appearance of the terrace.

- 5.3.3 The key issue here and has been for some recent proposals relating to replacement windows at listed properties in Letchworth Garden City (i.e. 168 Wilbury Way and 14 Ridge Road), is the ability for the window manufacturer to be able to reproduce a split transom feature that is the same width as that presently found on the host building and which is normally about 86-89mm wide. So, the question is whether to accept replacement windows with or without split transoms?
- 5.3.4 Interestingly, the quotation submitted with this application does show split transoms, but the width of the transom overall is greater than the transoms on either side. The problem is that window manufacturers appear to be reluctant to produce a split transom where the 86mm or thereabout is divided more-or-less equally between the bottom rail of the top-hung light and the top rail of the lower fixed light. A consequence of this being that a section of frame is introduced between the bottom and top rails thus increasing the width of the transom overall to an unacceptable extent.
- 5.3.5 Other than the applicant withdrawing the application, there are three options:
- ☐ The LPA to approve the original proposal with overly wide split transoms and with a section of the window frame between the bottom and top rail increasing the depth of the transom,
 - ☐ Seek like-for-like replacement windows and in doing so, refuse listed building consent and advise applicant to consider an alternative window joinery manufacturer,
 - ☐ Seek a compromise whereby the applicant retains his preferred manufacturer and the windows retain an 86-89mm transom width but with no split transom openings.
- 5.3.6 The applicant's chosen window provider (Timber Windows) cannot manufacturer an appropriate split-transom detail and the applicant intends keeping to their preferred provider i.e. third option above. In the case of no.168 Wilbury Way and no.14 Ridge Road, the decision was taken to allow for the omission of split transoms in favour of a singular transom either incorporated within either a fixed light or a full height top-hung light and this is also the approach adopted on the current application. The proposed windows will have flush casements incorporating 18mm double-glazed units and monkey tail ironmongery.

5.4 **Alternative Options**

- 5.4.1 As stated above, the window design has been amended to provide transoms of a consistent width and whilst the amended drawings show windows that would maintain the original window pattern, splits transoms are omitted, therefore, the historical method of opening for some windows would not be recreated.

5.5 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 5.5.1 None applicable.

5.6 **Conclusion**

- 5.6.1 The Ridge Road estate has suffered more than any other listed buildings in the Garden City from loss of original windows and this scheme would have a mildly erosive impact

with the loss of split transoms but not to the extent that would warrant a refusal of listed building consent. Notwithstanding the lack of split-transoms, it is considered that the window design (as amended) would: i) preserve the appearance of this listed building; ii) maintain the special character of this seminal development overall (incl. Birds Hill) and iii) maintain 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. The new windows shall be manufactured in timber, receive flush casements, be externally white-painted and have 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 Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
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Date: 14 November 2024	
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