

CONSERVATION TEAM CONSULTATION APPLICATION RESPONSE

APPLICATION REF:	25/01387/fph
CASE OFFICER:	Thomas Howe
APPLICATION SITE:	17 Benslow Lane Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9RE
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Erection of greenhouse following demolition of existing green house
RECOMMENDATION: There is NO OBJECTION. The scheme will satisfy the provisions of Sections 16(2) (LBC) and /or 66(1) (FP/FPH) and/or 72(1) (both) 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. SUGGESTED CONDITIONS: None	
SHORT SUMMARY: Impact on listed building's special character – not applicable Impact on character and appearance of the conservation area – The proposal is not considered cause a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area due to its location to the rear of the property. The application drawing also shows a new rear following the bricking up of a previous window open. There is no mention of this element in the proposal description but there is no objection as this would be a re instatement and with correct materials. Impact on setting of heritage assets and how this affects significance – There will be no impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area for the reasons stated above.	
Site Context: The link to the conservation area appraisal is below. Hitchin CA Character Statement_26-07-11.indd Benslow Lane is part of Character Area 6 and essentially has a residential character reflecting growth of the town following the arrival of the railways. There is a high concentration of well detailed mid to late 19th century houses mainly retaining the original materials and character.	

The proposal is not considered to cause harm these elements which contribute to the significance of the character of the conservation area.

DETAILED ANALYSIS AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Please see summary section above.

HERITAGE POLICY ASSESSMENT:

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031:

NPPF (December 2024):

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.”

Relevant National Guidance i.e. Historic England:

N/a

CONCLUSION:

The proposal is not considered to cause harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area for the reason discussed in the summary section.

OFFICER: Tricia Craggs

DATE: 16.7.2025