

North Hertfordshire District Council

Building Conservation comments

File Ref: 24/01882/FP

Date: 17/12/2024

Planning Officer: TH

Address: 2 Pledgers Place, Barkway, Royston, Hertfordshire SG8 8DQ

Subject: Erection of one 3-bed dwelling including associated parking, landscaping and works following demolition of existing fire damaged 3-bed dwelling.

1.0 Recommendation

- 1.1 In determining applications, great weight should be given to the conservation of Designated Heritage Assets (para 212, NPPF) and any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset from development within its setting requires clear and convincing justification (para 213).
- 1.2 The proposal will not harm the setting of nearby listed buildings including the nearest which is no.96 High Street (grade II) and will preserve the character, appearance, and significance of the BCA, thus, will satisfy the provisions of Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (LB & CA) Act 1990 and will also satisfy the aims of Section 16 of the Framework and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031. Consequently, this application is **UNOBJECTIONABLE** in heritage terms.

2.0 The Local Plan and NPPF (Dec 2024)

- 2.1 Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2031 is relevant as are following paragraphs of the NPPF are relevant in the consideration of these cases:
- **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*).

3.0 Proposal

- 3.1 The application site is located on the western side of the High Street, opposite Burrs Lane and is within the Barkway Conservation Area. The site is to the rear of nos.96-102 High Street with an access between nos.102 and 106 High Street. As noted at 2.1 of the submitted DAS

The site was developed under application 14/02467/1 '2x4 bed detached dwellings, cart shed providing parking for two cars for each dwelling and associated amenity areas following demolition of existing industrial buildings (as amended by plans received 26 November 2014).

- 3.2 Under ref: 14/02467/1, I offered the following recommendation:

*Notwithstanding the fact that there is a significant built form already on the application site and that the site sits behind properties fronting on the High Street, I remain unconvinced that the proposed form of Unit 2 would make a "positive contribution to local character" (para 131 of NPPF). On balance, there is perhaps insufficient justifiable grounds for refusing this application on the basis of harm caused to the conservation area but I am also not prepared to give my full support to the scheme as submitted. On balance, and with some reluctance, I raise **NO OBJECTION**.*

- 3.3 The full extent of damage to the existing building is noted in the plate images in the DAS and I note that Hertfordshire Building Control that the building is a dangerous structure and should be demolished as soon as possible. I note that a section 78 Notice was not served on the owners as a Demolition Request under Section 80 of the Building Act had been made to Hertfordshire Building Control and counter Notice served under Section 81. I note that HBC have said that whichever route was taken the outcome would be the same, and the dangerous structure will be removed.
- 3.4 I note that there will be no change to amount of development (120sqm), ridge heights are matching, and the building's appearance will not change with matching black timber cladding and slate roofing used. Fenestration will all be to match to include rainwater goods and the metal flue pipe.



- 3.5 Looking at the conditions imposed under ref: 14/02467/1, most of these are not heritage/design related but I make a couple of comments:

Condition 3 stated:

Details and/or samples of materials to be used on all external elevations and the roof of the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development is commenced.

Reason: To ensure that the development will have an acceptable appearance which does not detract from the appearance and character of the surrounding area.

Although the application indicates materials being used on a like-for-like basis as the building that has now been removed, there is no detail in the

application as to what the materials will be, so it may be prudent to reapply Condition 3.

Condition 11 stated:

Two bird nest boxes, in accordance with the recommendations of the Protected & Important Species and Habitats Assessment report dated September 2014, shall be erected prior to the first occupation of the dwellings.

Reason: To increase opportunities for wildlife in the new development and in the area in accordance with guidance in PPS9.

I note that the Senior Ecologist has not raised an objection. However, I also note that Condition 11 was formally signed off and so I am unclear as to whether the two bird nest boxes were installed or not. If they were installed and if one were on the building that has been demolished, would we be seeking a new box to compensate for the loss of that removed (if that were the case)?

**Mark Simmons
Senior Conservation Officer**