North Hertfordshire District Council
Building Conservation comments

File Ref: 18/01110/FP
Date: 24/09/2018
Planning Officer: SD
Address: Fats 8A, 8B and 8C Upper King Street, Royston SG8 9AZ
Subject: Internal alterations to three existing first and second floor residential units to create 2 x two bedroom and 2 x one bedroom flats.

My detailed comments are to be found under ref: 18/01111/LBC.

Recommendation
The alterations proposed would result in the removal of some historic fabric including: sections of walls, panelled doors and a staircase and no justification has been provided in support of this scheme. Currently, the proposal is, therefore, contrary to Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2031 (Proposed Submission, October 2016).

Furthermore, it could be said that the three existing flats provide an optimum viable use for the upper floors of this listed building. If, therefore, it is considered that harm would be occasioned to the listed building then a case that this would secure an 'optimum viable use' for the upper floors could not be made. This would appear to be an exercise in purely seeking an uplift in the value of this heritage asset by achieving an additional unit. As the scheme currently stands I advise that the extent of harm would be sufficient to merit an **OBJECTION**.

However, subject to receiving feedback regarding suggested changes, I may be minded to conclude that the alterations would not occasion sufficient harm to elements of the building's special character to justify a refusal but in order to satisfy the provisions of Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Section 16 of the NPPF further work is necessary in terms of justification and alterations proposed.

If changes are made, then I advise that the description is amended to read as:

Conversion of 3no. existing first and second floor residential units into 3 x 1 bedroom first floor flats and 1 x two bedroom second floor flat.

Mark Simmons
Senior Conservation Officer