

Supporting Planning Statement

Replacement Windows — South Elevation

Site	16 Leys Avenue, Letchworth Garden City
Job reference	3701
Proposal	Replacement of 10no. sash windows to the south elevation
Conservation Area	Letchworth Conservation Area
Relevant history	24/01008/FP — change of use of first floor to 2no. flats (approved)

1. Introduction

This statement supports a planning application for the replacement of 10no. windows on the south elevation of 16 Leys Avenue, Letchworth Garden City. The site lies within the Letchworth Conservation Area.

The application is brought forward as a full planning application. The building contains flats, which fall outside the scope of permitted development rights under Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended); a full application is therefore required irrespective of the site's conservation area status.

The proposal is properly characterised as an external alteration to the appearance of the building — the replacement of 10no. windows within the south elevation, faithfully replicating the appearance, proportions and detailing of the traditional timber sashes they replace — rather than works to individual residential units. It is assessed on that basis throughout this statement.

2. The Site and Planning History

16 Leys Avenue is a three-storey building fronting Leys Avenue and The Arcade, with commercial use at ground floor and residential accommodation above at first and second floor. Planning permission was granted under application ref. 24/01008/FP for change of use of the first floor from commercial to residential, forming two flats (101 and 102). Two further flats already exist at second floor level. Flats 101 and 102 both have windows onto the south elevation; of the two second floor flats, only one does. The application therefore affects windows serving three of the building's four flats.

The south elevation, fronting Leys Avenue, retains a symmetrical arrangement of vertically-proportioned sash windows at first and second floor level, consistent with the wider historic character of the Arcade and Leys Avenue frontage.

3. The Proposal

The application proposes the replacement of 10no. existing timber sash windows on the south elevation, all of which are original timber units now in a poor state of repair.

- Replacement units are ECOSlide® PVC-U vertical sliding sash windows, operating on the same tilt-and-slide principle as the existing timber sashes;
- Each replacement window matches the glazing bar configuration, proportions and sash horn detailing of the window it replaces, as shown on the proposed elevations (Dwg. 3701/06);
- A run-through sash horn and deep bottom rail profile has been specified to replicate the visual weight and joinery detailing of the original timber sashes;
- The finish will match the existing painted timber appearance.

Manufacturer's information is enclosed demonstrating that the ECOSlide® system has been successfully installed in comparable heritage and conservation area settings, replicating traditional timber sash proportions while improving thermal and operational performance.

4. Heritage and Policy Considerations

Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) requires that great weight be given to the conservation of heritage assets, including the character and appearance of conservation areas, and that any harm to significance requires clear and convincing justification (NPPF paras 212–215).

The proposed windows have been designed to match the existing sash windows in configuration, proportion and detailing. On this basis, the proposal is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Letchworth Conservation Area, with no harm arising to its significance.

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031 Policy SP13 (Historic Environment) sets out the Council's strategy for the historic environment, giving great weight to the conservation of designated heritage assets and maintaining a strong presumption in favour of the retention, preservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their setting according to their significance. Although the replacement sashes are uPVC rather than timber, they are designed to closely follow the glazing bar pattern, proportions and sash horn detailing of the original units, and the proposal accords with this presumption without material change to the character or appearance of the Letchworth Conservation Area.

5. Conclusion

The proposed replacement windows address the poor condition of the existing timber sashes while faithfully replicating their appearance, proportion and detailing. The proposal will preserve the character and appearance of the Letchworth Conservation Area and is considered to accord with national and local heritage policy. It is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.

PENTANGLE DESIGN
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