

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Mark Simmons.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/02465/LBC	Internal alterations to facilitate conversion of existing basement to additional office space.	Upton House Baldock Street Royston Hertfordshire SG8 5AY

Submitted Plan Nos

Location Plan 7654 101A

HE1 Designated heritage assets

SECN16 Conserve + enhance historic environment

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 **22/00575/LBC** - Part residential conversion and extension of existing offices and basement with internal and external alterations, to form three 1-bed flats and one 3-bed dwelling (as amended by plan received 03/05/22).

Withdrawn 28/07/22.

22/00574/FP - Part residential conversion and extension of existing offices and basement, to form three 1-bed flats and one 3-bed dwelling (as amended by plan received 03/05/22).

Withdrawn 28/07/22.

21/00566/FP - Insertion of double-door opening in later rear extension to provide refuse and cycle storage, accessed from new concrete ramp. External joinery redecoration. (Amended plan received 07/04/21).

Approved 11/08/21.

21/00311/LBC - Internal alterations to basement and ground floor only. Form new double-door opening in later rear extension to provide refuse and cycle storage, accessed from new concrete ramp. External joinery redecoration (as amended by drawing nos. 22056_02 B and amplified by drawing no. 22056_05 received on 07/04/2021).

Approved 04/05/21.

16/02050/1LB - Erection of internal stud walling and internal alterations to facilitate change of use of 'The Francis Hedges Suite' (class B1) to one residential (C3) bedsit (as amended by plan received 11 April 2017).

Approved 19/04/17.

16/02049/1 - Change of use of 'The Francis Hedges Suite' (class B1) to one residential (class C3) bedsit. Erection of internal stud walling, and internal alterations (as amended by plan received 11 April 2017).

Approved 19/04/17.

05/01043/1LB - LBC: Conversion of 3 first floor flats into offices, involving internal alterations (as amplified by letter and plans, drawing number 0505/A/03 Rev A received 31/08/2005).

Approved 03/10/05.

05/01042/1 - Conversion of 3 first floor flats into offices and ancillary works (as amplified by letter and plans, drawing number 0505/A/03 Rev A received 31/08/2005).

Refused 09/09/05

00/00686/1LB - Conversion of second floor flat into three residential units. Two additional windows on side and rear elevation, provision of gates and railings to front entrance porch. Wall and railings on frontage following demolition of existing wall. Painting of frames and ancillary works.

Approved 09/11/00.

00/00685/1 - Conversion of second floor flat into three residential units. Two additional windows on side and rear elevation, provision of gates and railings to front entrance porch. Wall and railings on frontage following demolition of existing wall.

Approved 09/11/00.

93/00698/1LB - Internal alterations to facilitate change of use and conversion from offices to five residential units on first and second floors (as amended by plans received 7th December 1993 and 31st January 1994).

Approved 25/05/94.

93/00427/1 - Change of use of 1st and 2nd floors from offices to residential.

Approved 10/02/94.

91/00892/1 - Change of use of 2nd floor residential to offices.

Approved 05/09/91.

82/00219/1 - Application for Listed Building Consent for erection of single storey rear extension.

Approved 20/05/82.

82/00218/1 - Erection of single storey rear extension.

Approved 20/05/82.

80/00727/1 - Change of use of second floor from residential to offices.

Approved 08/07/80.

79/00637/1LB - Change of use to offices with company flat on 2nd floor and insertion of one window on ground floor rear elevation and alterations to internal partition walls.

Approved 05/07/79.

78/00795/1 - Change of use of ground floor to offices, 1st and 2nd floors to 5 self-contained residential flats involving internal alterations & demolition of rear outbuildings and provision of car parking facilities at rear.

Approved 05/09/78.

74/00476/1 - Change of use of building to offices.

Refused 18/09/74.

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 (Dec 2024):

- **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*).

4.0 **Representations**

4.1 **Press & site notices** – No comments received.

Royston Town Council – No objection.

Historic England – Non-intervention letter - We do not wish to offer any comments. We suggest that you seek the views of your specialist conservation adviser. It is not necessary for us to be consulted on this application again, unless there are material changes to the proposals.

5.0 **Planning Considerations**

5.1 **Site and Surroundings**

5.1.1 Upton House (referred to as 4 Baldock Street in the list entry) is grade II* listed and is in the Royston Conservation Area. The building and the area are Designated Heritage Assets for the purpose of applying the aims of the NPPF and the list entry is provided at the following link.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1102056?section=official-list-entry>

5.2 **Proposal**

5.2.1 The application is described as: ***Internal alterations to facilitate conversion of existing basement to additional office space.***

5.3 **Key Issues**

5.3.1 The key issue here is to consider the impact of the proposal on the listed building. 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 Listed building consent was granted under ref: 21/00311/LBC for '*Internal alterations to basement and ground floor only. Form new double-door opening in later rear extension to provide refuse and cycle storage, accessed from new concrete ramp. External joinery redecoration (as amended by drawing nos. 22056_02 B and amplified by drawing no. 22056_05 received on 07/04/2021)*'. Being the case officer at the time I wrote the following:

5.3.4 It is noted that the existing (probably original) basement staircase exists within the residential use of this building, as such, would not be accessible to the office users and which also means that the entire ground floor is not currently in B1 use as stated in the HS.

5.3.7 Whilst it is acknowledged that access to the basement can only be achieved from the ground floor of the residential element, considering that there are cases of staircases to basements being located immediately behind/under the principal staircase, a staircase in this position at Upton House would ensure that the Priory Suite and Francis Hedges Suites are not interfered with and would give access to the basement from within the office space.

5.3.3 Details of the proposed staircase under ref: 21/00311/LBC were not conditioned and the staircase then figured in the drawings submitted under refs: 22/02038/FP & 22/02039/LBC for '*Part residential conversion and extension of existing offices and basement, to form one 1-bed, one 2-bed and one 3-bed Airbnb units. Internal alterations*'.

5.3.4 The Heritage Statement submitted with the current application addresses the following which I consider to be robustly addressed:

- ☐ Significance
- ☐ Proposed Works & Impact Assessment
- ☐ Potential Impacts on Special Character
- ☐ Significance of the Impact
- ☐ Mitigation / Design and Conservation Approach

5.3.5 With regard the staircase, the Heritage Statement says:

- ☐ *The basement and circulation features contribute to the building's plan form and reading of historic hierarchy. (3c)*
- ☐ *Installation of a new internal staircase connecting the basement with the ground floor: providing improved access and circulation, likely involving removal or adaptation of part of the basement/ground floor floorplate and insertion of a new stairwell. (4a)*
- ☐ *Installing a new staircase may require removal or alteration of historic floor structure, ceilings, walls or joinery in the basement or ground floor, thereby disturbing or removing historic fabric or spatial relationships. (4b)*
- ☐ *The installation of the staircase has a medium heritage impact if it involves removal of historic fabric; however, if internal design is minimal, reversible and carefully located, the impact can be low. (4c)*

5.3.6 The intention is to introduce a modern office fit-out (partitioning, lighting, services, HVAC) which minimises the impact upon the basement and that rooms with interest are to remain with no alterations. It is also noted that in order to retain the character of the space in the basement conversion, the Heritage Statement states that full modern linings which obscure original fabric are to be avoided and that original window/vent openings are to be retained, lighting is to be sympathetic, and services routed to minimise intervention.

5.3.7 Important here is that there is good documentation and recording and the Heritage Statement advocates that prior to any site works, a detailed photographic and measured survey of the basement and staircase location should be carried out, including any historic features to be removed or altered.

5.3.8 The plans indicate a form of tanking to several rooms, the detail of which are not provided. A condition is proposed to cover this. There is also some uncertainty as to the condition of the existing basement windows which have not been inspected so a condition is proposed to cover this also. Finally, a manufacturer's leaflet entitled SERIES 25 MID-RANGE VERTICAL SLIDING from Selectaglaze is included with the application but the agent was unable to verify as to whether secondary glazed is proposed or not but this would not affect the recommendation below.

5.4 **Alternative Options**

5.4.1 Nonapplicable.

5.5 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

5.5.1 Pre-commencement conditions are proposed. These have been discussed with the agent and being an application for Listed Building Consent, applicant agreement is not required.

5.6 **Conclusion**

5.6.1 The proposal satisfies the provisions of Section 16(2) 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 I recommend 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. Prior to the commencement of works a photographic survey or video recording of the ground floor and basement areas of where the new staircase is proposed shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To secure and safeguard the provision for inspection and recording of matters of architectural and/or historical importance associated with the building that may be

lost in the course of works.

3. Prior to the commencement of works a photographic window survey of all existing basement windows shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this listed building under Section 16(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

4. The existing windows referred to in Condition 3 above shall be retained and repaired unless considered beyond repair in which case section details of new window(s) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the manufacture of any new windows. The new windows (if existing window(s) are deemed beyond repair) shall then be installed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this listed building under Section 16(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

5. Prior to the commencement of works, a specification of the tanking method shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the tanking shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this listed building under Section 16(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

6. The storage room between Offices 2 and 3 shall remain untanked thereby maintaining the existing ceiling and wall finishes.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this listed building under Section 16(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Signed  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 15 January 2026	