North Hertfordshire District Council
Building Conservation comments

File Ref: 24/01536/FP & 24/01537/LBC
Date: 30/08/2024
Planning Officer: HT
Address: The Malt House, 27 Kneesworth Street, Royston, Hertfordshire SG8 5AB
Subject: Internal alterations to facilitate change of use from office to residential to create one 3-bed dwelling.

Introduction
I commented on 22 July 2021 and 4 August 2021 under ref: 21/01696/LBC for *'Internal alterations to facilitate Change of use from office to residential to create one 3-bed dwelling',* raising no objection. On 2 August 2024, I received an email from the architect stating:

You will recall that we had discussions on the above and subsequently were granted consent for the change of use to a single dwelling back in 2021. Given that is soon to expire, we have resubmitted the same application for approval to hopefully enable the client to proceed with this early next year. Obviously, you will have been consulted on this, but just thought that given our previous helpful discussions I would touch base to say that the application is exactly as previously approved and, if you have any questions or comments please do let me know so we can expedite matters.

The Malt House is grade II listed and is located within the Royston Conservation Area. The building and the conservation area are Designated Heritage Assets for the purpose of applying the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF.

As stated in the submitted Design, Access and Heritage Statement Rev A, under the address of 27 Kneesworth Street there are two, part brick and part timber frame attached properties under separate ownership. The first is known as The Barn, 27 Kneesworth Street and is located directly to the rear of 31 Kneesworth Street, the second is known as The Malt House, 27 Kneesworth Street and it is the latter that forms the subject of this application. The list entry covering both is as follows:

5255 KNEESWORTH STREET (East Side) Barn, former stables occupied by H Kerr, (Motor Body Repairs) behind No 31)

Early C17, formerly Stables of the Royal Household. Timber frame, red brick nogging. 6 bay roof truss; where visible has wind braces, tie and collar beams. Included partly for historical interest.

The Local Plan and NPPF
Since commenting previously, the Local Plan has been adopted (8 November 2022) and the NPPF has also changed (Dec 2023). Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031 is relevant as are the following paragraphs of the NPPF:

- ***200*** *(local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting)*
- ***203*** *(desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness),*
- ***205*** *(great weight should be given to the asset's conservation),*
- ***206*** *(clear and convincing justification), and*
- ***208*** *(harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use).*

The Proposal
The DAHS states that:

The latter two applications noted above (21/01695/FP & 21/01696/LBC – Conversion of offices to residential) are still valid but have an expiry date of 10th September 2024. The approved work has not as yet been carried out in any form as the clients have had concerns on political stability and market uncertainties but are now looking to do so in the near future albeit after the expiry of current consents.

Therefore, in advance of expiry of those current approvals, the original documents and application details are being resubmitted for approval. We would point out that there is no change to the submission of the previous approved application and all plans are included without alteration.

In line with my comments on 4 August 2021 I offer the same condition wording as set out below although an additional condition (no.2) was added by the case officer and with which I have no comment.

Suggested 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. Details of the external flues and routeing of the mechanical vent extraction to the kitchen and the second-floor bathroom shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of that part of the development hereby consented. The mechanical extract venting shall be implemented prior to the occupation of the dwelling.

   Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of this grade II listed building under Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031.

Recommendation
Subject to the above conditions, it is considered that the scheme will not occasion harm to the listed building. I, therefore, raise **NO OBJECTION** on the basis that the proposal will satisfy the provisions of Section 16(1) (LBC only) and 66(2) (FP only) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Section 16 of the NPPF and the aims of Policy HE1: Designated Heritage Assets, of the emerging North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

Mark Simmons
Senior Conservation Officer#