

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Henry Thomas.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/01542/FP	Replace existing entrance steps with an access ramp and replace existing retaining wall.	Reading Room 12 High Street Barkway Royston Hertfordshire SG8 8EE

Submitted Plan Nos

S1 S2 RR/TB/24/1 RR/TB/24/2 Location Plan

1.0 Policies

D1 Sustainable design

D3	Protecting living conditions
HE1	Designated heritage assets
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places
SECN16	Conserve + enhance historic environment

2.0 **Site History**

- 2.1 24/01543/LBC - Replace existing entrance steps with an access ramp and replace existing retaining wall.
Concurrent Application.
- 2.2 12/01464/1LB - Installation of grab rail to main entrance and exterior light above entrance porch
Conditional Consent.
- 2.3 10/00877/1LB - Damp proof tanking and dry-lining involving modified window and door rebates.
Conditional Consent.
- 2.4 01/01373/1LB - Internal alterations to form kitchen and WC.
Conditional Permission.

3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 **Site Notice and Neighbour Consultation** – None received.
- 3.2 **HCC Highways** – No objection subject to Informative.
- 3.3 **Barkway Parish Council** – None received.
- 3.4 **HCC Archaeology** – None received.
- 3.5 **Conservation Officer** – No objection.

The building is Grade II listed (list entry number: 1102600), located within the Barkway Conservation Area. Listed as part of the a group listing which comprises Number 14 High Street and the Reading Room/ Parish Hall, the building is multi-phased. Number

14 is a thatched dwelling, dating from the seventeenth century whilst the Reading Room is brick and dates from the nineteenth century.

The Reading Room is accessed via the side elevation, set behind a small section of grass. The proposal seeks to change the landscaping in this area to create a new, accessible entranceway. This will remove a section of the grass, with the ramp in a dogleg formation, with brick walls to its edges. The pathway will be paved.

Subject to the following condition, the proposal is considered to have no negative effect on the significance of the Conservation Area or the setting of the listed building. The condition is recommended to ensure the development is executed appropriately.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

- 4.1.1 The Reading Room is a Grade II listed, single storey, end terrace building which is orientated perpendicular to the high street. The building is currently a community space for charities usage. The site is located on the west side of the Barkway High Street and is within the settlement boundary and the Barkway Conservation Area.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 Replace existing entrance steps with an access ramp and replace existing retaining wall.

4.3 **Key Issues**

- 4.3.1 The key issues for consideration are as follows:
- The impact of the development upon the Grade II listing.
 - The acceptability of the design of the proposed development and its resultant impact on the character and appearance of the locality.
 - The impact that the proposed development would have on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.
 - The impact that the development would have on the environment.

Impact on Designated Heritage Assets:

- 4.3.2 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that "In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."
- 4.3.3 Paragraph 203 of the NPPF states that when "*determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of... the desirability of new development making positive contribution to character and distinctiveness*".
- 4.3.4 Paragraph 205 of the NPPF sets out that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
- 4.3.5 Paragraph 206 of the NPPF sets out that any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.

4.3.6 Paragraph 208 of the NPPF states *“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use”*.

4.3.7 Policy HE1 of the North Herts Local Plan states:

“Planning permission for development proposals affecting Designated Heritage Assets or their setting will be granted where they (as applicable):

- a) Enable the heritage asset to be used in a manner that secures its conservation and preserves its significance;*
- b) Incorporate a palette of materials that make a positive contribution to local character or distinctiveness, where it is appropriate and justified; and*
- c) Will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, and this harm is outweighed by the public benefits of the development, including securing the asset’s optimum viable use.”*

4.3.8 Following consultation with the Conservation Officer, no objection has been raised to the proposed works and their impact to the grade II listed building. The proposed development would comply with both local and national planning policies.

Design and Appearance:

4.3.9 The objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include those seeking to secure the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings, and places (Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places). Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that *“Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable communities”*. In this regard, Policy D1 and D2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan are consistent with the objectives set out within the NPPF.

4.3.10 The proposed external alterations to the property would be sympathetic to the locality and would not result in adverse harm to the street scene or the character of the listed building whilst providing access for disabled users.

4.3.11 This is considered in line with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies D1, D3 and HE1 of the Local Plan.

Impact on Neighbouring Occupiers:

4.3.10 The objectives of the NPPF seek to ensure that developments secure a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers (Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places). This principle is reflected in the provisions set out in Policy D2 and D3 of the North Herts Local Plan.

4.3.11 Policy D3 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan sets out that planning permission will be granted for developments proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions.

- 4.3.12 The proposed works are of a minor scale and will not, in my view, impact on existing neighbouring amenity.

Highways and Parking:

- 4.3.13 Policy T1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan states that “*planning permission will be granted provided that... development would not lead to highway safety problems or cause unacceptable impacts upon the highway network*”.

- 4.3.14 The proposed alterations would not result in adverse harm to the pedestrian footpath or the highway. The highways officer did not raise any objections to the proposal.

Environmental Implications:

- 4.3.15 The proposed development, by virtue of its limited scale in general terms together with the sustainable location would have no significant implications for the local environment in terms of carbon emissions and therefore would be generally in compliance with Section 14 of the NPPF.

Biodiversity Net Gain:

- 4.3.16 This application is exempt from BNG Legislation defined under article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

4.4 Conclusion

- 4.4.1 Overall, as stated above it is considered that the proposed development is compliant with the necessary provisions of the Local Plan policies and the guidelines set out in the NPPF.

4.4. Alternative Options

- 4.5.1. N/A

4.6 Pre-Commencement Conditions

- 4.6.1 None.

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting approved documents and plans

listed above.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of permission.

Biodiversity Net Gain

This development is not subject to the statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan condition because it is considered exempt under the statutory exemptions (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>) or transitional arrangements in respect of the biodiversity gain condition.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted proactively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Signed  Sam Dicocco Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 25 October 2024	