

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/01232/LBC	Replace 4no. timber windows (2no. front dormer windows, 1no. rear dormer window and 1no. first floor window on side elevation) with 12mm slimline double-glazed timber windows (as amended by drawing of Window 4 received by email on 17/12/2024).	Manor Gardens Cottage Park Lane Old Knebworth Knebworth Hertfordshire SG3 6QB

Submitted Plan Nos

Location Plan Window 1 (email 20/08/2024) Window 2 (email 20/08/2024) Window 3 (email 20/08/2024) Window 4 (email 17/12/2024)

1.0 Policies

HE1 Designated heritage assets

SECN16 Conserve + enhance historic environment

2.0 Site History

2.1 The only LB application on file is the following:

96/00147/1LB - Installation of support beam, braces and tie bar to prevent further outward movements at rear eaves level.

CON 26.03.1996

3.0 Policies

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:

- ☐ **135 c)** (*sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment*),
- ☐ **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 **Knebworth Parish Council** – No comments received.

Natural, Historic and Built Environment Advisory Team – In this instance I consider that this development is unlikely to have a significant impact on heritage assets of archaeological interest and I have no comment to make upon the proposal.

Press & site notices – No representations received.

5.0 Planning Considerations

5.1 Site and Surroundings

- 5.1.1 Manor Gardens Cottage is grade II listed and is located within the Old Knebworth Conservation Area. The list entry reads as follows:

House. C17 wing on right. Circa 1960 modern extension. The wing is timber framed with plaster, flint and brick infill. Timber corner post exposed on right end. 1 storey and attics. 2 windows, the ground floor with c.1960 glazing bar casements, the gabled attics with C19 and C20 casements. Machine tile roof. Extension is plastered, 2 storeys and 1 window.

The house and conservation area are Designated Heritage Assets for the purpose of applying the aims of Section 16 of the Revised NPPF.

5.2 Proposal

- 5.2.1 Replace 4no. timber windows (2no. front dormer windows, 1no. rear dormer window and 1no. first floor window on side elevation) with 12mm slimline double-glazed timber windows (as amended by drawing of Window 4 received by email on 17/12/2024).

5.3 Key Issues

- 5.3.1 The main issue is to consider the impact of the works on the special character of the listed building and the appearance of the conservation area.
- 5.3.2 Windows are often a significant feature of listed buildings. They strongly contribute to a building's interest and appearance. Any changes can noticeably alter how the building and area looks. There is much by the way of guidance provided by local planning authorities which discourages the installation of double-glazed windows into listed buildings and whilst North Herts does not have specific guidance on this matter, it is important that the following are considered when considering replacement of windows:

- ☐ Evidence of craftsmanship
- ☐ Use of old or rare materials
- ☐ Detail of design

If the existing windows contribute positively to the building's special character and the frames are capable of repair, this should normally be the way forward.

Historic England guidance entitled 'Traditional Windows: their care, repair and upgrading' published in 2017.

- 5.3.3 At page 54 of this guidance it states:

"If used in multi-paned windows, IGUs will generally be less efficient than secondary glazing since even the most efficient units will not overcome thermal bridging through the frame and glazing bars. This is particularly an issue when IGUs are added to steel windows. For this reason and for cost effectiveness, many replacement windows are made instead with a single IGU with timber glazing bars or leaded lights applied to the surface. This loss of historic fabric and detailing and change in appearance are likely to reduce the significance of the window and the host building."

- 5.3.4 Further on, Historic England's general approach to the alteration or replacement of windows is set out below:

1. Where historic windows, whether original or later insertions, make a positive contribution to the significance of a listed building they should be retained and repaired where possible. If beyond repair, they should be replaced with accurate copies.

2. Where historic windows have already been replaced with windows whose design follows historic patterns, these usually make a positive contribution to the significance of listed buildings. When they do, they should therefore be retained and repaired where possible. If beyond repair, they should be replaced with accurate copies.

3. Where historic windows or replacement windows of historic pattern survive without historic glass it may be possible to introduce slim-profile double-glazing without harming the significance of the listed building. There are compatibility issues to consider as the introduction of double-glazing can require the renewal of the window frame to accommodate thicker glazing, thereby harming significance. These issues are covered in Section 4 of this guidance.

4. Where historic windows have been replaced with ones whose design does not follow historic patterns, these are unlikely to contribute to the significance of listed buildings. Replacing such windows with new windows of a sympathetic historic pattern, whether single-glazed or incorporating slim-profile double-glazing, may cause no additional harm. It also provides an opportunity to enhance the significance of the building, which is the desired outcome under national policy.

5. Where a new window or re-glazing is agreed, the reflective properties of secondary and double-glazing as compared to modern, polished single-glazing, do not usually harm the significance of the building. But when new multi-paned windows are proposed, the desirability of reproducing broken reflections by individually glazing each pane should be considered. Where the aesthetic value of the building is high, then the impact on the whole of the relevant elevation should be considered, including the desirability of accurately matching other windows.

5.3.5 Thermal upgrading of windows is considered in some detail. Historic England refers to recent research which has shown that by using secondary glazing with low emissivity coating, heat loss can be reduced by over 60%. It does not rule out the use of double-glazed windows in listed buildings but explains that conventional double-glazed units which are between 22 and 28mm thick, or slim profile double-glazed units which are between 10 and 16mm thick, differ from traditional glass which is normally between 2 and 3mm thick.

5.3.6 The Listed Property Owners Club acknowledges the above Historic England guidance which specifically addresses the subject of thermal upgrading of windows and double glazing. It describes that assessing the significance of a window and understanding the contribution it makes to the significance of the building is the key first step in deciding the correct approach to any alterations or upgrading. Where historic fenestration survives, Historic England explains that it is often an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved and repaired wherever possible. It describes how to determine the architectural and historic significance of windows so that decisions about altering them can be made in an informed way.

Guidance on Alterations to Listed Buildings

IHBC Toolbox Guidance Note GN2021/1 - January 2021

5.3.7 At 4.3.4 it states

“Proposals to double-glaze existing windows are often inappropriate as well as having a surprisingly high carbon impact and a short lifespan. Thicker glazing units require glazing bars to be modified to accommodate them and the window will then have a very different appearance.”

Whilst at 4.3.5 it states

“Applied glazing bars to the surface of windows or sandwiched between panes of double-glazing are generally inappropriate. Secondary glazing may be acceptable subject to careful location of the framing elements so as not to be disruptive to the visual appearance when seen from the exterior.”

Impact on the listed building

- 5.3.8 At the validation stage the quality of the submission was noted and the technical support team was advised that a decision could be made during the 8-week determination period as to whether the proposed windows are acceptable or not or whether additional information is required.
- 5.3.9 Of the 4no. windows proposed to be replaced, only existing Window 3 (rear dormer) is of a design that is considered acceptable for this listed building. The two front dormers do not have glazing bars, and both have a top-hung vent window. The first-floor side window also has a top-hung light. It is considered that the existing windows fall within the fourth category of 5.3.4 above i.e. Where historic windows have been replaced with ones whose design does not follow historic patterns, these are unlikely to contribute to the significance of listed buildings. The advice continues by saying that replacing such windows with new windows of a sympathetic historic pattern, whether single-glazed or incorporating slim-profile double-glazing, may cause no additional harm. It also provides an opportunity to enhance the significance of the building, which is the desired outcome under national policy.
- 5.3.10 This raises the question as what constitutes a sympathetic historic pattern? Whilst the proposed horizontal bar detail of Windows 1,2 and 3 is acceptable, the lack of detail for Window 4 is considered unacceptable. This has been addressed in a revised drawing received on 17 December 2024.
- 5.3.11 The current proposal is for 12mm dgu's but the glazing bar profile is not as might be expected for casement windows here. The agent has confirmed by email on 17 December that the profile can be changed to ovolo. Confirmation has also been received by email that the casements will be flush which is a positive. The windows will not, however, be externally putty finish.

5.4 Alternative Options

- 5.4.1 None applicable.

5.5 Pre-Commencement Conditions

- 5.5.1 None applicable.

5.6 Conclusion

- 5.6.1 Considering that the windows are non-original, there is scope not only to improve the windows aesthetically but also to improve the building's thermal performance by introducing slimlite glazing. It is considered that the detailing of the new windows as set out in Conditions 2 and 3 will preserve the listed building's special character, thereby, satisfying 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 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. Windows 1, 2 and 3 shall be manufactured with flush, side-hung casements, internal ovolo profile glazing bars and without trickle vents unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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

3. Window 4 shall be manufactured as a single, side-hung, 6-pane flush casement and internal ovolo profile glazing bars and without a trickle vent unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

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

Signed  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 18 December 2024	