

Heritage Statement

48 Ridge Road, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire, SG6 1PN

Listed Building Consent Application

Date: 11/07/2025

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement supports an application for Listed Building Consent for works at 48 Ridge Road, a Grade II listed cottage forming part of the Birds Hill Estate in Letchworth Garden City. The proposed works involve the replacement of all external windows and doors with **like-for-like timber units**. This statement assesses the impact of the proposed changes on the significance of the heritage asset, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Historic England guidance, and local planning policy.

2. Description of the Heritage Asset

48 Ridge Road is one of a group of cottages (Nos. 2 to 122 even) on the **Birds Hill Estate**, designed in 1906 by **Barry Parker and Raymond Unwin**. The estate was created for Garden City Tenants Ltd and is recognised as a prototype for later council housing developments throughout the UK.

Key features of the estate include:

- One-and-a-half-storey cottages with varied rooflines
- Roughcast render walls and tiled roofs with distinctive chimneys
- Mullioned timber casement windows with glazing bars and tile labels
- Recessed arched doorways and asymmetrical cottage-style façades

The estate is significant as the earliest realised example of the Garden City village green layout, published by Parker and Unwin in *The Art of Building a Home* (1901).



3. Statement of Significance

The significance of 48 Ridge Road lies in:

- Its architectural character as part of the Parker & Unwin design
- Its role within the earliest Garden City layout
- Its contribution to the visual coherence and social concept of the estate
- Surviving original features such as timber joinery, window proportions, and doorway surrounds

The building is protected for its **group value**, and any changes must preserve the external form, materials, and detailing that contribute to the overall character.

4. Description of Proposed Works

The proposal is to **replace all existing windows and external doors** with **like-for-like timber units**, due to deterioration of the original materials and to improve the thermal/energy efficiency of the property by utilising specialist heritage grade slimline double glazing. The new joinery will be:

- Constructed from high-quality, durable hardwood or softwood (e.g. Accoya or similar, depending on local approval)
- Replicating existing dimensions, profiles, and opening mechanisms
- Painted in a heritage-appropriate finish (e.g. white sashes, black frames, if agreed)
- Fitted into existing openings, with no enlargement or repositioning

Where possible, original ironmongery and detailing will be retained and reused. Any double glazing will be **slimline heritage glass** (if permitted), set within traditional profiles.

5. Assessment of Impact

- **Positive conservation approach:** This is a **like-for-like replacement**, preserving appearance, form, and materials in keeping with the character of the building.
- **Material continuity:** The use of timber maintains the building's historic character and avoids harm from inappropriate modern materials (e.g. uPVC or aluminium).
- **Enhanced longevity:** The proposed works will protect the building's envelope, supporting long-term preservation of the fabric.



- **Visual integrity maintained:** Window and door design, glazing bars, and casement proportions will remain unchanged, preserving both individual and group value.
- There will be **no loss of historic significance** where original features are already beyond repair.

6. Justification and Mitigation

- The existing windows and doors have suffered deterioration from weathering and age; repairs are no longer viable in several cases.
- Full documentation (photos and measured drawings) will be provided to ensure accurate reproduction.
- All works are **reversible** and fully in keeping with the original design intention of the building.
- The replacements will maintain the visual and architectural integrity of the property and its role within the wider Birds Hill Estate.

7. Policy Compliance

The proposed works comply with:

- **NPPF Paragraphs 199–208**, ensuring that alterations to listed buildings preserve their significance
- Historic England's guidance on **replacing windows in listed buildings**, which supports like-for-like timber replacement when repair is not possible
- Local planning policies for the conservation of listed buildings in Letchworth and North Hertfordshire

8. Conclusion

The replacement of all windows and external doors with **timber units to match existing designs** is a sensitive and conservation-focused proposal. It ensures that the architectural and historic character of 48 Ridge Road is retained, contributes positively to the Birds Hill Estate's integrity, and supports the long-term preservation of this important heritage asset.

We respectfully request that Listed Building Consent is granted for the proposed works.

