

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

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

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/01602/LBC	Insertion of timber door to re-instate rear access following removal of render and EML (metal mesh wall), used to seal original door opening. Internal alterations.	31 Hitchin Street Baldock Hertfordshire SG7 6AQ

Submitted Plan Nos

BGU-001 A BGU -100a BGU -210A BGU -200C

1.0 Policies

HE1 Designated heritage assets

SECN16 Conserve + enhance historic environment

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 The full planning history can be viewed on file and below is the post 1982 history:

82/00038/1 - Internal alterations to facilitate change of use of outbuildings to function room with associated bar, store and toilets.

Conditional Permission

82/00039/1 - Application for Listed Building Consent for installation of internal partitions in outbuildings to provide function room with associated bar, store and toilets.

Consent

83/00279/1 - Installation of rear dormer window and reconstruction of part of roof.

Conditional Permission

84/01031/1 - Construction of first floor office above existing garage.

Conditional Permission

84/01815/1 - Rearrangement of existing parking and garden area to form new car park for 19 cars.

Conditional Permission

86/00137/1 - Construction of dormer extension to north-east elevation to provide additional hotel rooms in roof space.

Conditional Permission

86/00137/1 - Construction of dormer extension to north-east elevation to provide additional hotel rooms in roof space.

Conditional Permission

86/00138/1LB - Application for Listed Building Consent for construction of three dormer extensions to north-east elevation to provide additional hotel rooms in roof space.

Consent

86/00139/1LB - Application for Listed Building Consent to enlarge window on south elevation.

Consent

86/00140/1 - Erection of first floor extension to garage to facilitate its use as a 2

bedroom dwelling.

Conditional Permission

87/00315/1LB - Application for Listed Building Consent to enlarge side roof window.

Consent

87/00661/1LB - Installation of new side windows and one door bricking up of one entrance door and internal alterations to facilitate use of part of ground floor as 2-bedroom dwelling.

Consent

87/00660/1 - Change of use of part of ground floor from restaurant to 2-bedroom dwelling.

Conditional Permission

20/02218/FP - Change of Use from restaurant (Class E from the 1/09/2020) to C3 (residential) to create one 1-bed and one 2 bed flats. External window alterations to rear elevations.

Conditional Permission 17.03.2021

20/02285/LBC - Replacement double casement window to ground floor of rear courtyard and north-east courtyard elevations, together with refurbishment of mullion transom leaded light window on north-east courtyard elevation. Internal alterations (as amended by drawing nos. BDH-200E and BDH-210A received on 01/02/202 and 08/02/2021 respectively).

Conditional Consent 17.03.2021

21/02910/DOC - Discharge of Condition 2 (Flat 1 kitchen window) as attached to Listed Building Consent 20/02285/LBC granted on 17.03.2021

Withdrawn 19.12.2022

21/02912/DOC - Discharge of Condition 3 (Flat 2 reception window) as attached to Listed Building Consent 20/02285/LBC granted on 17.03.2021

Withdrawn 19.12.2022

21/02913/DOC - Discharge of Condition 4 (Mullion-and-transom window Flat 1) as attached to Listed Building Consent 20/02285/LBC granted on 17.03.2021

Withdrawn 19.12.2022

21/02914/DOC - Discharge of Condition 5 (Kitchen or bathroom ventilation) as attached to Listed Building Consent 20/02285/LBC granted on 17.03.2021

Withdrawn 19.12.2022

24/00537/FP - Change of Use from restaurant (Class E from the 1/09/2020) to C3 (residential) to create two x 1-bed flats. External window alterations to rear elevations.

Conditional Permission 24.06.2024

24/00538/LBC - Replacement double casement window to ground floor of rear courtyard and north-east courtyard elevations, together with refurbishment of mullion transom leaded light window on north-east courtyard elevation. Internal alterations.

Conditional Consent 24.06.2024

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 (Dec 2024):

- **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 **Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Planning Group** – No comments received

Natural, Historic and Built Environment Advisory Team – A Heritage Statement submitted with this planning application notes that the proposed new door replaces a modern insertion and that no historic fabric will be effected by this proposal. Therefore, in this instance, we have no comment to make on the proposal.

Press & site notices – No comments received.

5.0 **Planning Considerations**

5.1 **Site & Surroundings**

5.1.1 No.31 Hitchin Street is grade II listed and is located within the Baldock Conservation Area. Both the building and the area are Designated Heritage Asset for the purpose of applying the aims of the NPPF. The list entry can be found at the following link:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1175582?section=official-list-entry>

5.2 **Proposal**

5.2.1 The amended description to include internal alterations is as agreed with the agent on 5 August: ***'Insertion of timber door to re-instate rear access following removal of render and EML (metal mesh wall), used to seal original door opening. Internal alterations'***.

5.3 **Key Issues**

5.3.1 The key issue here is to consider the impact of the proposal on the listed building and the character and appearance of the Baldock Conservation Area. 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 The doorway position under consideration in this application existed in 1981 as it is clearly shown on the existing elevation under ref: 81/00123/1 for alterations to doors and windows on north-east elevation. This was the same time at which the door entrance was moved to replace a window more centrally on this elevation.

5.3.3 At 2.2 on page 9 of the submitted Heritage Statement it states the following with which I agree:

The listed buildings to the rear which form Vintage Court have some evidential and historical value, but the years of redevelopment have reduced the aesthetic and communal value and would be of low significance as historical assets. Some archaeological interest may be evident in the site in general, particularly as it falls in an area of known archaeological significance but as no invasive works or excavations are planned this is not relevant to this study. It should be noted that the building defined as Doctors Cottage and other buildings which form Vintage Court are not listed.

5.3.4 Even though there is evidence of a doorway in this location previously this has not been the case for over 40 years, and it is unknown as to whether a doorway existed in this location when the rear wing was added.

5.4 **Alternative Options**

5.4.1 In an email to the agent on 30 July I wrote:

Just for clarification, I assume that because the ground floor is marked up as Commercial Units A and B that the residential conversion at ground floor is no longer taking place?

It is noted that the proposed replacement door as indicated on drawing no. BGU-70 does not match the door detail on drawing no. BGU-210A but this could be addressed by condition.

Secondly, I find the relationship between the proposed door and the existing mullion and transom large window alongside to be a little awkward. There would be a preference to change the door position to that marked in red below but I appreciate that this would have two adverse impacts on the kitchenette to Commercial Unit B by i) reducing storage/worktop space and ii) reducing natural light. Furthermore, access directly into Commercial Unit B would be via the kitchenette. Natural light could be achieved by inserting a small side light alongside the suggested door position with the remaining kitchen units shown in blue below. Alternatively, a smaller kitchenette could be provided behind a short screen wall creating a lobby entrance to Commercial Unit B.

5.4.2 The agent has responded stating:

First point - Correct the proposals are now to retain and split the existing commercial use class and provide a separate entrance for the residential unit

Second point - Noted. I can update the elevation to reflect the detail on 700 if required.

Third point - I can confirm that we already have approval for your recommendations, which I had independently concluded were appropriate—primarily due to their minimal impact on the original

fabric of the building. The discovery of the original door opening during the course of the works provided the necessary confidence that the proposals are both acceptable for a listed building and with the client's requirements.

I appreciate your concern regarding the relationship between the door and the adjacent window. Had the original opening not been evident, I would have been hesitant to recommend this design. However, it is clear that the building fabric has already undergone alterations—possibly during its initial construction or a subsequent adaptation—so the proposed works will not affect any significant historic fabric.

It is also worth noting that the neighbouring flat features a similarly positioned door adjacent to a window. This arrangement is consistent with the character of this elevation and others within the courtyard, where buildings have evolved through various adaptations to accommodate changing uses. This architectural diversity contributes positively to the overall character of the courtyard and, in our view, does not detract from the significance of the listed building.

5.5 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

5.5.1 None applicable.

5.6 **Conclusion**

5.6.1 The proposal would not necessarily occasion harm to the listed building's special character or harm the appearance of the Baldock Conservation Area. However, considering the relationship between the door and window alongside which is a concern it was considered worthwhile exploring alternatives. Having said that and in light of the response to my email dated 30 July confirming that no changes are proposed, I conclude that the proposal will satisfy Sections 16(2) and 72(1) 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, and is, therefore, **UNOBJECTIONABLE**.

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. Notwithstanding the 2-panelled door type shown on the proposed North-East Courtyard Elevation on approved drawing no. BGU-210A, the external door shall be a 4-panelled door type as indicated on approved drawing no. BGU-700 unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and 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 Local Plan.

Signed  Anne McDonald Determining Officer	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 5 August 2025	