

Heritage Statement

32 Sollershott East, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire, SG6 3JN
Listed Building Consent Application
Date: 01/10/2025

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement supports an application for Listed Building Consent for works at 32 Sollershott East, a Grade II listed building within a Group of 4 houses and detached house forming an interesting, angled corner treatment at the junction of Sollershott East and South View. The proposed works involve the replacement of 3 no. external windows 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

The building is one of a group of 4 houses plus a detached house, forming an interesting corner treatment at the junction of Sollershott East and South View, designed by C. M. Crickmer in 1911.

The house is Tudor-Beathan style (a version of Tudor revival infused with Arts & Crafts / domestic revival style). And key features include:

- Two storeys; brick ground floor with rendered first floor.
- Tiled roof, with outer gables swept to first-floor level, large gabled bays at the corner of the block.
- A gatehouse with a central, gabled entrance, with 'tumbling in' brick gable flanked by chimneys disguised as octagonal turrets, oriel window over the gate.
- Mullioned casement windows with leaded lights, tile labels above windows; round-arched central gateway; projecting bays and turrets with hipped roofs.

The building was, and still is, held up as one of the finest examples of domestic architecture in the Garden City, illustrated in early publications (for example C. B. Purdom's the Garden City, 1913). The building contributes to the overall heritage value of Letchworth as the first Garden City — reflecting the town's ideals of well-designed domestic housing that harmonises with green spaces, high standards of craftsmanship, and attention to detail.



3. Statement of Significance

The significance of 32 Sollershott East lies in:

- Its architectural character as part of the C M Crickmer design
- Its role within the earliest Garden City layout
- Its contribution to the visual coherence and social concept of the area
- Surviving original features

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 3 no. existing windows – Ground floor and first floor Bay windows and quadruple first floor window to front elevation** 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 double glazed sealed units. 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 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 character area.

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 32 Sollershott East is retained, contributes positively to the local area'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.

