

CONSERVATION TEAM CONSULTATION APPLICATION RESPONSE

APPLICATION REF:	25/02645/fph
CASE OFFICER:	Harriet Saunders
APPLICATION SITE:	15 The Avenue Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 9RJ
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Single storey rear extension and attached outbuilding following demolition of existing outbuilding, conservatory, and garage.

RECOMMENDATION:

There is **NO OBJECTION**. The scheme will satisfy the provisions of Sections 16(2) (LBC) and /or 66(1) (FP/FPH) and/or 72(1) (both) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

SUGGESTED CONDITIONS:

None

SHORT SUMMARY:

Impact on character and appearance of the conservation area –
The proposal is located in the Hitchin conservation area within Character Area 5. The link to the appraisal statement is copied below:

[Hitchin CA Character Statement 26-07-11.indd](#)

The first house in The Avenue was completed in 1896, and the new road was renamed The Avenue because of the tree planting which accompanied the new houses. Amongst the positive features of this character area are

- Peaceful late 19th century purpose-built suburb.
- A high concentration of well detailed houses of various sizes, some of them locally listed.
- Clay tiled roofs with decorative ridge tiles, prominent chimney stacks and attractive pots.
- The use of red brick, false 'timber framing', painted pebbledash and tile hanging.
- Bay or oriel windows, and porches, add interest, with high quality joinery details.
- Survival of most of the original front doors and sashed windows.
- Street trees and planting in the spacious gardens provide a sylvan character.
- Survival of old footpaths across the area, reflecting the layout of the fields before they were built over

Impact on setting of heritage assets and how this affects significance – The proposal is not considered to cause harm to the character of the conservation area as it will not be in public view.

The materials proposed for the development are sympathetic and should reflect the palette of materials that are characteristic of The Avenue i.e.as listed in the positive features above.

Site Context:

[Character Area 5 of the Hitchin Conservation Area.](#)

This area is described as late c19 and early c20 residential suburb. The area conveys a very positive image of a well-maintained architecturally embellished residential suburbs situated in a verdant setting. Therefore any development will need to reflect this character through the use of design and materials.

DETAILED ANALYSIS AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Please see summary and site context sections above.

HERITAGE POLICY ASSESSMENT:

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031:

NPPF (December 2024):

The Local Plan and NPPF

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 and the policies contained within it i.e., Policy HE1. The plan was adopted November 2022.

The relevant paragraph numbers at Section 16 of the July 2021 version of the NPPF have been changed as follows:

197. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

199. 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 (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

200. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.....

202. 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.

206. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition) – December 2017

At para 14 under the sub-heading 'Landscape Assessment and Amenity' it states that "Analysis of setting is different from landscape assessment. While landscapes include everything within them, the entirety of very extensive settings may not contribute equally to the significance of a heritage asset, if at all. **Careful analysis is therefore required to assess whether one heritage asset at a considerable distance from another, though intervisible with it – a church spire, for instance – is a major component of the setting, rather than just an incidental element within the wider landscape.**"

At para 17 it states (my emphasis in bold): "All heritage assets have significance, some of which have particular significance and are designated. The contribution made by their setting to their significance also varies. **Although many settings may be enhanced by development, not all settings have the same capacity to accommodate change without harm to the significance of the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate it.** This capacity may vary between designated assets of the same grade or of the same type or according to the nature of the change. It can also depend on the location of the asset: an elevated or overlooked location; a riverbank, coastal or island location; or a location within an extensive tract of flat land may increase the sensitivity of the setting (i.e. the capacity of the setting to accommodate change without harm to the heritage asset's significance) or of views of the asset. This requires the implications of development affecting the setting of heritage assets to be considered on a case-by-case basis."

Relevant National Guidance i.e. Historic England:

Other relevant documents (Please specify):

CONCLUSION:

There are no objections to the proposal as it not considered to cause harm to the character and appearance of the conservation for and subject to the comments given above.

OFFICER: Tricia Craggs

DATE: 27.11.2025