**DELEGATED FILE NOTE**

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

| APPLICATION REFERENCE | BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT | APPLICATION SITE |
|---|---|---|
| 18/00682/LBC | External alterations to rear elevation and internal alterations (as amended by drawing nos. 18/03/02/002A & 18/03/02/004A received on 21/05/2018). | 35 Baldock Road<br>Letchworth Garden City<br>Hertfordshire<br>SG6 3JX |

**Submitted Plan Nos**

Location Plan 18/03/02/001 18/03/02/003 18/03/02/002A 18/03/02/004A

**1.0 Policies**

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| SECT12 | Conserving and enhancing historic enviro |

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 **08/02177/1GEN** – Internal and external alterations.
Principal Conservation Officer internal memo dated 14/10/2008 states that:

*"….. The internal character, architectural features and layout of this building have remained substantially intact as a very good surviving example of an early Garden City house…."*

**10/00310/1LB** – Replace rotten softwood cills with hardwood. Replace rotten casement windows to front, rear and west elevations and replace rear door (D3) (as amended by drwg 2230/01C received 14/04/2010).
**CLBC 22/04/2010**

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Press & site notices** – No representations received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 No.35 Baldock Road is the western one of a pair of large semi-detached houses. The houses are set well back from the street frontage in large garden plots. The properties are grade II listed and are considered to *be 'among the very best early Letchworth houses'* (Letchworth – The First Garden City, Mervyn Miller). Of typical render finish and with tiled roofs, the houses were built in 1905 and designed by H C Lander who was one of the architects based in Letchworth. In fact, no. 35 was his own house with the pair being based on a design by Voysey, one of the country's major Arts and Crafts architects. Baldock Road is within Letchworth Conservation Areas and is generally characterised by larger detached and semi-detached houses with the generous open layout typical of the south-west part of the town.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 See description above.

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 The consideration for this proposal is whether it will conserve the significant character of
the listed building in line with the legislation and current national policy and guidance. The nature of the works is such that the character and appearance of the conservation area will not be significantly affected by the proposal. Apart from consideration of Section 12 of the NPPF and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (Proposed submission, October 2016), the proposal is also to be considered in

terms of Sections 16 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

4.3.2 There are a number of original features at ground floor which contribute positively to this property's special character and include: timber floors, a number of original internal doors, 3no. original fireplaces and an exceptional central room with an intact staircase (unpainted). The original Study, Morning Room and Living Room (principal reception rooms), therefore, possess a high degree of significance and special interest. The rooms to the west side of the property (original kitchen / scullery / pantry / larder / coal store and gardener's WC) possess less features of special interest but still contribute overall to the building's special character. For instance, a redundant cooking range nestles within what would have been the original kitchen fireplace opening.

4.3.3 The proposal can be separated into three distinct elements as set out below:

***Replace three-light casement on rear elevation with a triple set of bi-fold doors.***

The existing window is part of the scheme implemented in 2010 and which, I understand, was the subject of a Heritage Foundation grant. The window matched as closely as possible the window that was removed and whilst not of historic interest, its size and position on the rear elevation maintains H C Lander's original design. The variety of double, triple and 4-light casements on this elevation is considered to make a positive design statement. The proposed installation of the bi-fold doors would introduce a larger opening to this particular well-designed elevation and would deflect attention away from the original rear door entrance.

In 2008 when commenting on internal and external alterations, Ms Marten (Principal Conservation Officer at the time) stated *that "….. The internal character, architectural features and layout of this building have remained substantially intact as a very good surviving example of an early Garden City house…."* . Whereas, when the same officer commented on the works at no.37 some 7 years earlier the officer stated that no.37 had been much altered. On the basis that no.35 is so intact and mindful of not disturbing the rear elevation too greatly, the applicant was advised to reconsider this aspect of the proposal and to retain the 3-light casement. The scheme has been amended to address this.

***Replace rear door and window to gardener's WC with a pair of casement windows.***

It is understood that the WC was purposefully designed with external access only for the gardener. The window is also very simple in comparison to other windows on this elevation. Whilst there is a case for discouraging the removal of the WC door and window as this contributes to the building's narrative, it is also acknowledged that the proposed replacement double-casement will provide much improved natural light into the proposed enlarged kitchen and offer a further view out towards the well maintained rear garden. On balance, the loss of the external door and plain window and their replacement with a double-casement window would not occasion harm to the building's special character.

***Internal alterations.***

Whilst there is a good conservation reason to retain the historic plan form for what is a relatively unaltered, architect-designed early Garden City semi-detached house, the works would not, in my opinion, cause undue harm to the building's special character and will facilitate the installation of a kitchen that, it could be said, would be commensurate with and make a positive contribution to the use of the host building. On balance, I consider the modest internal works to be acceptable.

4.4 **Conclusion**

4.4.1 It is considered that the proposed works will not occasion harm to this grade II listed building or to the Letchworth Conservation Area, thereby, satisfying Sections 16 & 72 respectively of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the aims of Section 12 of the NPPF and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (Proposed Submission, October 2016). The proposal is, therefore, considered to be **UNOBJECTIONABLE.**

5.0 **Recommendation**

5.1 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. The joinery details for the new double-casement rear window to the kitchen shall match the triple-casement kitchen window alongside, for instance, glazing bar profile, flush casements and not incorporating trickle vents, unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

   Reason: To safeguard the listed building's special character.

3. The existing kitchen fireplace and inserted range shall be retained in-situ and not covered over as part of the kitchen design unless otherwise agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

   Reason: To safeguard the listed building's special character.

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| Signed<br><br>Simon Ellis<br><br>Determining Officer | Development Management<br>North Hertfordshire District Council<br>Council Offices<br>Gernon Road<br>Letchworth<br>Herts<br>SG6 3JF |
| **Date:** 21 May 2018 | |