

ENERGY STATEMENT

Proposed Change of Use and Conversion of First and Second Floors from Former Hotel Accommodation (Use Class C1) to 8 Residential Flats (Use Class C3)

20 High Street, Baldock, Hertfordshire SG7 6AX

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Energy Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the change of use and conversion of the first and second floors of the Grade II Listed Building at 20 High Street, Baldock, Hertfordshire SG7 6AX, from former hotel accommodation (Use Class C1) to eight self-contained residential flats (Use Class C3).

The proposal comprises the refurbishment and reconfiguration of existing upper-floor accommodation to provide high-quality residential accommodation whilst preserving the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

The building has already benefited from thermal performance improvements through the replacement of windows undertaken pursuant to previously approved planning and listed building consents. In addition, approved secondary glazing to the front elevation windows will further improve thermal performance by reducing heat loss and air infiltration whilst maintaining the historic appearance of the building.

The energy strategy follows the recognised energy hierarchy:

- Be Lean – Reduce energy demand through fabric improvements and thermal upgrades.
- Be Clean – Incorporate efficient heating, hot water, lighting and ventilation systems.
- Be Green – Consider renewable and low-carbon technologies where compatible with the heritage significance of the building.

The proposals achieve the maximum reasonable improvements to energy performance consistent with the building's Grade II listed status and represent a

sustainable form of development that secures the long-term beneficial use of an important heritage asset.

2. INTRODUCTION

This Energy Statement has been prepared to accompany a planning application for the change of use and conversion of the first and second floors of the Grade II Listed Building at 20 High Street, Baldock, Hertfordshire SG7 6AX from former hotel accommodation (Use Class C1) to eight self-contained residential flats (Use Class C3).

The proposals seek to bring vacant and underutilised upper-floor accommodation into beneficial residential use through sensitive refurbishment and adaptation works. The development will provide additional housing within Baldock town centre whilst preserving the historic significance of the listed building.

As the building is designated as a Grade II Listed Building, opportunities for energy efficiency improvements are constrained by the need to protect historic fabric and architectural character. Consequently, the energy strategy has been developed to achieve the maximum reasonable improvements in energy performance whilst respecting the significance of the heritage asset.

The proposal represents a sustainable form of development through the re-use of an existing building, the retention of embodied carbon and the provision of residential accommodation within a highly accessible town-centre location.

3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework supports the delivery of sustainable development and the transition to a low-carbon future. The Framework encourages improvements to energy efficiency whilst recognising that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031

The proposal has been prepared having regard to the relevant policies of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan, including:

Policy SP1 – Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire

The proposal promotes sustainable development through the re-use of an existing building within a sustainable town-centre location.

Policy SP9 – Design and Sustainability

The development seeks to improve environmental performance through proportionate energy efficiency measures compatible with the building's historic significance.

Policy D1 – Sustainable Design

The scheme adopts a fabric-first approach to reducing energy demand and incorporates energy-efficient building services.

Policy HE1 – Designated Heritage Assets

The proposals have been designed to preserve the significance of the Grade II Listed Building whilst securing improvements to its environmental performance where appropriate.

Building Regulations

The conversion will be undertaken in accordance with Building Regulations Approved Document L1B. The guidance recognises that special consideration should be given to listed buildings where strict compliance with standard energy efficiency requirements would unacceptably alter their character or appearance.

4. EXISTING BUILDING

20 High Street, Baldock is a Grade II Listed Building occupying a prominent position within the historic town centre.

The ground floor is currently vacant. The first and second floors comprise former hotel accommodation and are the subject of this application for change of use and conversion to eight self-contained residential flats (Use Class C3).

The building is of traditional construction and incorporates:

- Solid masonry external walls;
- Traditional timber floor structures;
- Timber roof construction;
- Historic architectural detailing;

- Timber windows and doors.

The building has recently benefited from the replacement of windows undertaken pursuant to previously approved planning and listed building consents. These works have improved the thermal performance of the building whilst preserving its historic character and appearance.

In addition, consent has previously been granted for the installation of secondary glazing to the principal front elevation windows. Once installed, the secondary glazing will further improve thermal performance through reduced heat loss and improved airtightness whilst maintaining the significance and appearance of the listed building.

The retention, refurbishment and adaptation of the existing building represent a sustainable form of development through the conservation of embodied carbon, avoidance of demolition waste and continued beneficial use of a designated heritage asset.

5. ENERGY STRATEGY

The proposed development follows the recognised energy hierarchy.

5.1 Be Lean – Reducing Energy Demand

The proposed development adopts a fabric-first approach to energy efficiency, seeking to reduce energy demand through improvements to the thermal performance of the existing building wherever practical and compatible with its Grade II listed status.

The building has already benefited from energy-efficiency improvements through the replacement of windows undertaken pursuant to previously approved planning and listed building consents. These replacement windows have improved thermal performance and reduced uncontrolled air infiltration whilst preserving the character and appearance of the listed building.

In addition, consent has previously been granted for the installation of secondary glazing to the principal front elevation windows. The approved secondary glazing will provide a further improvement in thermal performance by reducing heat loss and enhancing airtightness whilst retaining the historic fabric and appearance of the building.

These approved measures form an important component of the building's overall energy strategy and demonstrate that meaningful improvements to

energy performance can be achieved in a manner that respects the significance of the heritage asset.

Further improvements associated with the proposed conversion include:

Roof Insulation

Insulation will be upgraded within roof voids and sloping ceilings where accessible and practicable in order to reduce heat loss through the roof whilst retaining the existing roof structure and external appearance.

Floor Improvements

Where floor structures are exposed during refurbishment works, opportunities to improve thermal performance through the installation of insulation between floor joists will be incorporated where practical and appropriate.

Airtightness

Additional reductions in heat loss will be achieved through:

- Sealing service penetrations;
- Improving junction details where refurbishment works are undertaken;
- Repairing defects within the building fabric;
- Improving weather seals around windows and doors.

Collectively, these measures will improve occupant comfort, reduce energy demand and enhance the environmental performance of the building whilst safeguarding its special architectural and historic interest.

5.2 Be Clean – Efficient Building Services

The residential units will incorporate modern energy-efficient services including:

- High-efficiency electric heating systems and controls, or alternative low-carbon heating technologies where appropriate;
- Individual temperature controls for each dwelling;
- Well-insulated hot water storage systems;
- Low-energy LED lighting throughout;
- Energy-efficient extract ventilation systems serving kitchens and bathrooms.

These measures will reduce energy consumption and improve operational efficiency.

5.3 Be Green – Renewable and Low Carbon Technologies

The opportunities for renewable energy technologies are constrained by the listed status of the building and the need to preserve its architectural and historic significance.

The installation of visible roof-mounted renewable technologies may not be appropriate due to potential impacts upon the character and appearance of the listed building.

Should opportunities arise during detailed design to incorporate discreet low-carbon technologies without harm to the heritage asset, these will be considered in consultation with North Hertfordshire District Council.

Notwithstanding these constraints, the proposed fabric improvements and efficient building services will contribute significantly towards reducing operational energy demand.

6. BUILDING REGULATIONS AND HERITAGE CONSIDERATIONS

The proposals have been developed having regard to the requirements of Building Regulations Approved Document L1B and Historic England guidance relating to energy efficiency in historic buildings.

The listed status of the building requires a balanced approach whereby energy efficiency improvements are pursued where technically feasible and appropriate, whilst ensuring that historic fabric and architectural significance are preserved.

The measures proposed within this Energy Statement are considered to represent the maximum reasonable level of improvement achievable without causing harm to the significance of the Grade II Listed Building.

7. SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS

The proposed development delivers a number of sustainability benefits including:

- Re-use and refurbishment of existing upper-floor accommodation.

- Retention of a Grade II Listed Building and preservation of embodied carbon.
- Avoidance of demolition and redevelopment.
- Delivery of eight residential units within Baldock town centre.
- Reduced reliance on private vehicle use through proximity to services, facilities and public transport.
- Improved thermal performance through replacement windows, approved secondary glazing and additional fabric improvements.
- Installation of energy-efficient building services.
- Securing the long-term viable use and maintenance of a designated heritage asset.

The conversion of former hotel accommodation to residential use represents an efficient and sustainable use of an existing building resource.

8. CONCLUSION

This Energy Statement supports the proposed change of use and conversion of the first and second floors of 20 High Street, Baldock from former hotel accommodation (Use Class C1) to eight residential flats (Use Class C3).

The scheme follows the recognised energy hierarchy and adopts a fabric-first approach to energy efficiency. The building has already benefited from thermal performance improvements through approved replacement windows, and approved secondary glazing will provide further enhancements to thermal performance whilst preserving the significance of the listed building.

Additional improvements including roof insulation upgrades, airtightness measures, LED lighting and efficient building services will further reduce operational energy demand and improve occupant comfort.

The proposals therefore achieve the maximum reasonable level of energy efficiency improvement that can be accommodated within the constraints of a Grade II Listed Building and represent a sustainable form of development that accords with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, the North Hertfordshire Local Plan and Building Regulations guidance applicable to historic buildings.