

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Tricia Craggs.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/01185/LBC	Replacement of existing timber sash windows with double glazed heritage style timber sash windows and facilitating works	18 Horn Hill Whitwell Hitchin Hertfordshire SG4 8AS

Submitted Plan Nos

Location plan A 05

1.0 Policies

HE1	Designated heritage assets
SECN16	Conserve + enhance historic environment

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 Although not the most recent planning history the following is most relevant:

96/01095/LB - Insertion of two rooflights to existing roof

3.0 **Policies**

3.1 Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021). Relevant paragraph numbers at Section 16 are as follows: 197, 199, 200 and 202.

Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

4.0 **Representations**

4.1 No comments received.

5.0 **Planning Considerations**

5.1 **Site and Surroundings**

5.1.1 18 (Well House) Horn Hill West Side Whitwell is grade II listed and is located within the Whitwell Conservation Area (WCA). The building and the WCA are designated heritage assets and the list entry for the house reads as follows:

2 staff houses for No. 16 – now one house circa 1815 red brick with pyramidal slate roof and plastered eaves soffit. A square two storey, two windows wide block with shared large rectangular central chimney stack and reserved-chamfered corners all around the house. Side entrance on north in use with wood porch. On south converted to window. Symmetrical east front has plat band and flat red rubbered arches. Sash windows with 8 eight panes (renewed) and original canted iron decorative railings to first floor windows

5.2 **Proposal**

5.2.1 ***Replacement of existing timber sash windows with double glazed heritage style timber sash windows and facilitating works.***

5.3 **Key Issues**

5.3.1 The main issue is to consider the impact of the works on the special character of the listed building and upon the WCA.

5.3.2 Windows are often a significant feature of listed buildings. They strongly contribute to a building's interest and appearance. Any changes can noticeably alter how the building and area looks. There is much by the way of guidance provided by local planning authorities which discourages the installation of double-glazed windows into listed

buildings and whilst North Herts does not have specific guidance on this matter, it is important that the following are considered when considering replacement of windows:

- ☐ Evidence of craftsmanship
- ☐ Use of old or rare materials
- ☐ Detail of design

If the existing windows contribute positively to the building's special character and the frames are capable of repair, this should normally be the way forward.

Historic England guidance entitled 'Traditional Windows: their care, repair and upgrading' published in 2017.

5.3.3 At page 54 of this guidance it states:

"If used in multi-paned windows, IGUs will generally be less efficient than secondary glazing since even the most efficient units will not overcome thermal bridging through the frame and glazing bars....".

5.3.4 Further on, Historic England's general approach to the alteration or replacement of windows is set out below:

1. Where historic windows, whether original or later insertions, make a positive contribution to the significance of a listed building they should be retained and repaired where possible. If beyond repair, they should be replaced with accurate copies.

2. Where historic windows have already been replaced with windows whose design follows historic patterns, these usually make a positive contribution to the significance of listed buildings. When they do, they should therefore be retained and repaired where possible. If beyond repair, they should be replaced with accurate copies.

3. Where historic windows or replacement windows of historic pattern survive without historic glass it may be possible to introduce slim-profile double-glazing without harming the significance of the listed building. There are compatibility issues to consider as the introduction of double-glazing can require the renewal of the window frame to accommodate thicker glazing, thereby harming significance. These issues are covered in Section 4 of this guidance.

4. Where historic windows have been replaced with ones whose design does not follow historic patterns, these are unlikely to contribute to the significance of listed buildings. Replacing such windows with new windows of a sympathetic historic pattern, whether single-glazed or incorporating slim-profile double-glazing, may cause no additional harm. It also provides an opportunity to enhance the significance of the building, which is the desired outcome under national policy.

5. Where a new window or re-glazing is agreed, the reflective properties of secondary and double-glazing as compared to modern, polished single-glazing, do not usually harm the significance of the building. But when new multi-paned windows are proposed, the desirability of reproducing broken reflections by individually glazing each pane should be considered. Where the aesthetic value of the building is high, then the impact on the whole of the relevant elevation should be considered, including the desirability of accurately matching other windows.

5.3.5 Thermal upgrading of windows is considered in some detail. Historic England refers to recent research which has shown that by using secondary glazing with low emissivity

coating, heat loss can be reduced by over 60%. It does not rule out the use of double-glazed windows in listed buildings but explains that conventional double-glazed units which are between 22 and 28mm thick, or slim profile double-glazed units which are between 10 and 16mm thick, differ from traditional glass which is normally between 2 and 3mm thick. It is acknowledged that 'slimline' 16mm double-glazed units will have less of a harmful visual impact when compared with 'conventional' 22-28mm double-glazing but this does not necessarily mean that this is acceptable.

- 5.3.6 The Listed Property Owners Club acknowledges the above Historic England guidance which specifically addresses the subject of thermal upgrading of windows and double glazing. It describes that assessing the significance of a window and understanding the contribution it makes to the significance of the building is the key first step in deciding the correct approach to any alterations or upgrading. Where historic fenestration survives, Historic England explains that it is often an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved and repaired wherever possible. It describes how to determine the architectural and historic significance of windows so that decisions about altering them can be made in an informed way.

Guidance on Alterations to Listed Buildings IHBC Toolbox Guidance Note GN2021/1 - January 2021

- 5.3.7 At 4.3.4 it states:

"Proposals to double-glaze existing windows are often inappropriate as well as having a surprisingly high carbon impact and a short lifespan. Thicker glazing units require glazing bars to be modified to accommodate them and the window will then have a very different appearance."

Whilst at 4.3.5 it states:

"Applied glazing bars to the surface of windows or sandwiched between panes of double-glazing are generally inappropriate. Secondary glazing may be acceptable subject to careful location of the framing elements so as not to be disruptive to the visual appearance when seen from the exterior."

5.3.8 Impact on the listed building

- 5.3.9 The proposed seeks to replace 7 nos windows to the front, rear and side elevations.
- 5.3.10 The existing windows are later additions/replacement and are not considered to be historic fabric of significance.
- 5.3.11 Their replacement as proposed with timber double glazed are of the correct design and appearance.
- 5.3.12 In combination with the removal of past alterations i.e. reduction of size in the openings and removal of cills with the reinstatement of the stone cills and returning the window openings to their historic aperture is not considered to cause harm to the designated heritage assets.

5.4 Alternative Options

5.4.1 None.

5.5 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

5.5.1 None applicable.

5.6 **Conclusion**

5.6.1 It is considered that the proposal will not occasion harm to the listed building's special character or harm the character or appearance of the Whitwell Conservation Area. The proposal, thereby, satisfies the provisions of 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.

6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 I recommend that listed building consent be **GRANTED**.

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. Details and/or samples of materials to be used for the works, hereby granted consent, shall be submitted to and agreed, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority before any works are commenced.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the listed building to which this consent relates and to comply with Policies SP13 and HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

Signed  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 15 July 2025	