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| <b>DELEGATED FILE NOTE</b> |
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**CASE OFFICER:** ...Mark Simmons.....

| <b>APPLICATION<br/>REFERENCE</b> | <b>BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF<br/>DEVELOPMENT</b>                                                            | <b>APPLICATION SITE</b>                                               |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 25/00173/LBC                     | Retention of replacement windows to first floor of front elevation and ground floor of side elevation. | Coach Yard<br>2 Hitchin Street<br>Baldock<br>Hertfordshire<br>SG7 6AE |

**Submitted Plan Nos**

Location Plan

**1.0    Policies**

|     |                            |
|-----|----------------------------|
| HE1 | Designated heritage assets |
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## 2.0 Site History

- 2.1 Please see file as the planning history is extensive but the following are noted leading to up to the conversion post 2004:

**01/01678/1** - Conversion of part of former restaurant building into 4 dwellings  
**CP 29.10.2002**

**04/00040/1** - Conversion of part of former restaurant building into 5 dwellings, as a variation of permission granted on 29/10/2002 under reference 01/01678/1 (subdivision of internal space to create an extra unit)  
**CP 05.03.2004**

**04/00931/1** - Conversion of part of former restaurant building into 6 dwellings (as a variation of ref no 01/1678/1 granted on 29/10/2002)  
**CP 01.12.2004**

## 3.0 Policies

- 3.1 Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031 is relevant as are the following paragraphs of Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2024):

- ☐ 135 c) (*sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment*),
- ☐ 207 (*local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the*
- ☐ *significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting*)
- ☐ 210 (*desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*),
- ☐ 212 (*great weight should be given to the asset's conservation*),
- ☐ 213 (*clear and convincing justification*), and
- ☐ 215 (*harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use*).

## 4.0 Representations

- 4.1 **Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Planning Group** – No comments received.

**Press and site notices** – No comments received.

## 5.0 Planning Considerations

### 5.1 **Site & Surroundings**

- 5.1.1 The Old George and Dragon Hotel, 2 Hitchin Street, Baldock is grade II listed and is located in the Baldock Conservation Area. The building and the area are Designated Heritage Assets for the purpose of applying the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF. The list entry reads as follows:

***Early C19 front of red brick with slightly projecting 5 storey centre, 2 storey wings. Hipped tiled roof. 1:3:1 sash windows with glazing bars in reveals under flat arches, ground floor arched panels to 3 central windows, Dummy window in centre of each floor. Roof parapets, brick modillion cornice above 2nd floor. Modern wing on left.***

**Nos 2 to 16 (even) form a group.**

The stated 'modern wing on left' in the listing description, is the part of the building to which this application relates and which is now Flats 1-6 Coach Yard.

- 5.1.2 In an email that I issued to the current agent under ref: 22/01854/LBC, I wrote:

*As you are aware, the left-hand wing contains the inglenook and the wing further to the left is modern and in my opinion, not considered to possess significance. The building's significance is based on its early C19 frontage of a possibly earlier building (although not much by way of evidence to support this), its central location (arguable a landmark building) and particularly as a neighbour to the Parish Church, its well-established use as an 'inn' within the town and there is also anecdotal evidence to suggest this inn was a place that Samuel Pepys twice visited.*

- 5.1.3 Notwithstanding the slightly dismissive tone of my comment underlined, the furthest left-hand wing as viewed from Hitchin Street reads as part of the listed building and is considered as such.

## 5.2 **Proposal**

- 5.2.1 The proposal is described as **'Retention of replacement windows to first floor of front elevation and ground floor of side elevation'**.

## 5.3 **Key Issues**

- 5.3.1 The key issue is to consider the proposal in terms of the impact upon the special character of this grade II listed building and upon the character and appearance of the Baldock Conservation Area.

- 5.3.2 At 4.1 of the Heritage Statement it says:

*The application seeks retrospective listed building consent for the previous replacement of 7 windows to the front elevation at first floor, together with 2 windows to the side elevation at ground floor. These were periodically replaced as and when required due to their beyond repair condition.*

Whilst at 4.3 the HS reads (my emphasis in bold):

*The head of the management company **was unfortunately advised** several years ago that as long as the windows were replaced like for like for design, then no consents were required. The windows are identified in the following images. The first photograph is of the front elevation. The 7 windows replaced are at first floor (referred to as Nos. 1-7, from left to right). The next image is of a focused photograph of window No. 7.*

- 5.3.3 The HS continues by stating that *'The casement windows have been replaced gradually over the last 4 year period'* (6.4) and that *'It is considered the replacement*

*windows have preserved the significance and special character of this listed building'* (6.5) and that *'The windows have not harmed any features of significance or character of the listed Building'* (6.6).

5.3.4 The HS states that there is *'no discernible difference between the previous and current windows at this first-floor level'* and that *'the works are considered to have preserved the character and appearance of the Baldock Conservation Area'* (6.7). Finally, at 6.9 the HS claims that *'The sensitive replacement of the windows has caused no harm to the significance or setting of any nearby listed buildings'*.

5.3.5 The chronology of Google Maps imagery does help to illustrate window changes. The following table highlights three aspects of window design and a coding is provided below the table. The November 2009 image indicates windows changes only 5 months after the first image but then the windows revert to a similar situation to that in June 2009 by September 2014. On this basis, some caution is advised regarding the November 2009 image as no other evidence has come forward to confirm window changes at that time.

| Google Maps Images | W1                 | W2                 | W3                 | W4                 | W5                | W6                | W7                 |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| June 2009          | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  |
| Nov 2009           | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV |
| Sept 2014          | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  |
| July 2016          | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  |
| June 2017          | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  |
| May 2021           | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  |
| Nov 2021           | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB<br>TV  |
| Aug 2024           | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>ABGB<br>TV | FLCA<br>SGB       | FLCA<br>SGB       | FLCA<br>SGB        |

\*\* FLCA = Flush casements, SGB = Slender glazing bars, ABGB = All bar glazing bars,  
TV = Trickle vents

5.3.6 Over the last decade there is evidence of windows having 'all bar' glazing bars but there are no consents indicating that these received listed building consent. The current application seeks to regularise the situation for 7no. windows at first floor on the front elevation and two ground floor side windows which have, according to the submission, been installed over the last 4 years. As noted at 5.3.2, windows 1-4 (incl.) on the front elevation are flush casement types with 'all bar' glazing bars and trickle vents whilst windows 5-7 (incl.) are flush casement types with slender glazing bars and

no trickle vents. The contrast between both window types is quite significant and the application is seeking consent for both types. It is considered that windows 5-7 are far better detailed when compared with windows 1 – 4. No objection is raised regarding the ground floor side windows.

- 5.3.7 It is understood that the conversion of this wing took place under application ref: 04/00931/1 (no corresponding application for listed building consent). On 6 July 2004, the Conservation Officer wrote:

*.... Where new windows are shown in the side elevation, there are existing openings. The precise appearance of the windows in these openings is not clear from the drawings. The production of detailed drawings will, therefore, need to be conditioned to show timber sections and any method of opening the windows. This is to ensure a satisfactory appearance for the building, the conservation area and the approach to the Parish Church. .... There is also an issue about new timber windows that are currently being introduced into the building. These do not comply with the notes on the 04/00040/1 and, in conservation terms, represent another unsympathetic change to the building. I understand that this issue is currently being investigated with the agent.*

- 5.3.8 On 13 July 2004, the Conservation Officer wrote the following:

*I met with Mr Kitchener Snr at the site this morning .... With regard to windows, he showed me an altered window with small half round beads replacing the existing large heavy square one. When painted these will appear closer to simple puttied glazing bars. I said that I have no objections to these. I advised him to use this detail for windows throughout the development. I asked him to write and confirm this .... He was proposing to use small-paned windows in the side openings on to the entrance to the churchyard. Given that these are such small openings, I have suggested plain glazing as shown on the application drawings. I would suggest, under the circumstances, that this detail be still conditioned. If possible, I would also suggest a condition requiring a detailed drawing of the new glazed screen in the front elevation.*

- 5.3.9 Unfortunately, window details were not conditioned (although the glazed screen was) but Mr Kitchener did confirm on 29 July 2004 that *“the glazing beads to the replacement windows have been changed to a smaller section as recommended”*. These are believed to be the same windows that can be seen in the September 2009 Google image.

- 5.3.10 On 1 April 2025, the agent confirmed that his client purchased and moved in to Flat 4 in March 2015 and became Manager of the Management Company in June 2017. Apparently in 2021, he made a telephone enquiry to the Council's Development Management Team and was informed by the Duty Planning Officer that no permission was required if windows in this later wing were replaced like-for-like. According to the agent, the Manager replaced windows 1, 2 & 3 in 2021 to match the previous windows. Although the agent mentions that the windows were replaced without trickle vents following a telephone conversation between the Conservation Officer and the agent on 11 April 2025, the latter confirmed that he meant to say that the windows were replaced with trickle vents. A previous owner of the relevant flat changed windows 5, 6 & 7 'at some point' and windows 4, 5, & 7 have apparently been repaired.

- 5.3.11 On 2 April 2025 the agent emailed saying the Manager had spoken with the previous owner/manager who owned 4 of the 6 flats between 2005 and 2017 and says that he

did not change any of the windows. The agent says that Google Street View images are not to be relied upon.

#### 5.4 **Conclusion**

5.4.1 Notwithstanding some confusion that may have arisen as to when windows were precisely replaced and by whom, this application seeks listed buildings consent for the retention of 9no. windows (7no. replacement windows to first floor on the front elevation and 2no. ground floor on the side elevation).

5.4.2 It appears to be the case that the window changes made by Mr Kitchener in July 2004 are likely to be the same windows seen in the September 2009 Google Maps image and that by July 2016 externally some of these windows had slightly deteriorated. Whether it was a result of change in ownership or condition of the windows, by June 2017 windows 1 -4 (incl.) had been replaced including the glazing bar profile from slender bars to an 'all-bar' type but windows 5, 6 & 7 remained with slender glazing bars. All seven first floor windows had trickle vents since conversion and although windows 5, 6 & 7 no longer have trickle vents (which is a positive), trickle vents remain at windows 1 – 4 (incl.). Although not considered an appropriate detail for historic buildings, the fact that trickle vents have existed since conversion, it is considered that this detail is unobjectionable. I conclude that existing windows 5, 6 & 7 on the front and the 2no. side windows are considered acceptable.

5.4.3 The key point is that the glazing bar detailing for windows 1 -4 (incl.) changed between July 2016 and June 2017 and from slender bars to an all-bar type. Even though this detail has existed for windows 1 -4 (incl.) for several years, by reason of the wide poorly detailed glazing bars this is considered to have a mildly erosive impact on the appearance of this later wing of limited architectural and historic interest but still forming part of this grade II listed building which occupies a prominent position in the Baldock Conservation Area. The proposal therefore harms the listed building's special character, thus failing to satisfy the provisions of Section 16(2) 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. The degree of harm is low on the less substantial harm continuum and there are no public benefits to outweigh this harm and this part of the listed building has an optimum viable use.

#### 5.5 **Alternative Options**

5.5.1 Non applicable.

#### 5.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

5.6.1 Non applicable.

#### 6.0 **Recommendation**

6.1 In light of my report, I recommend that a **SPLIT DECISION** be issued.

**Development A:** That listed building consent be **GRANTED** to 'Retain windows numbered 5, 6 and 7 at first floor on the front elevation and 2no. ground floor windows on the side elevation'.

**Development B:** That listed building consent be **REFUSED** to 'Retain windows 1-4 (incl.) at first floor on the front elevation'.

1. That Listed Building Consent be GRANTED for Development A - Retain windows numbered 5, 6 and 7 at first floor on the front elevation and 2no. ground floor windows on the side elevation.

That Listed Building Consent be REFUSED for Development B - Retain windows 1-4 (incl.) at first floor on the front elevation.

#### Reason for Refusal

Great weight has been given to this building's conservation (para 212, NPPF). The Old George and Dragon Hotel, 2 Hitchin Street, Baldock is a grade II listed building located in the Baldock Conservation Area. The building is described as having an early C19 front of red brick with slightly projecting 5 storey centre, 2 storey wings and with a modern wing to left and the building forms a group with nos. 2 to 16 (even) Hitchin Street. The modern wing is the part of the building affected and which is now Flats 1-6 Coach Yard. Although the pane subdivision (6-pane), method of opening (side-hung casements), material (timber) and external finish (white-painted) are all acceptable, by reason of the glazing bar profile/section, windows 1 -4 (incl.) at first floor on the front elevation harm both the listed building's special character and the appearance of the Baldock Conservation Area. Windows 1 - 4 (incl.) fail to satisfy the provisions of Sections 16(2) & 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. The extent of harm is considered low on the less than substantial harm continuum. There are no public benefits to outweigh the degree of harm identified and the building also has an optimum viable use.

|                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>Signed</div> <div></div> <div>Sam Dicocco</div> | <div>Development Management<br/>North Hertfordshire District Council<br/>Council Offices<br/>Gernon Road<br/>Letchworth<br/>Herts<br/>SG6 3JF</div> |
| <div>Determining Officer</div> <div>Date: 17 April 2025</div>                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                     |