



Clutterbuck c1920s

## 10 Norton Way North

<b>1.</b>	<b>Matter for Consideration</b>	
	1.1	An application for: Two storey front extension, dormer window and new external chimney to side elevation
<b>2.</b>	<b>Information</b>	
	2.1	Applicant: _____
	2.2	Site: Freehold house built c1913. The surrounding area is designated as Heritage Character Area and is a Home of Special Interest.
	2.3	A copy of the refusal letter and Heritage Advice Service (HAS) minute, is available in <b>Appendix A</b> .
	2.4	Photographs are available at <b>Appendix B</b> .
	2.5	An email requesting the AMC to review the scheme is in <b>Appendix C</b> .
	2.6	A site location map is available at <b>Appendix D</b> .
	2.7	<b>A3 format copies of the drawings for the proposals and the original plan, are attached at the end of this report.</b>

	2.8	Planning consent ref 21/01735/FPH was approved on 27 <sup>th</sup> July 2021.
	2.9	The AMC is asked to review the decision to refuse consent for the Two storey front extension, dormer window and new external chimney to side elevation which is contrary to the Design Principles.
<b>3. Case Officer Comments</b>		
	3.1	10 Norton Way North forms one end of a terraced group which wraps around the corner of Norton Way North into Common View. Designed by Bennett and Bidwell, this is an extremely important building to the history of Letchworth Garden City.
	3.2	<p>This is a Home of Special Interest and Mervyn Miller's description states: -</p> <p><i>Nos. 10-14. Architects: Bennett and Bidwell (1913). This excellent block turns the corner from Common View into Norton Way North. It consists of a centre, with twin gables, set diagonally across the road junction, with flanking wings, again gabled, at an angle in line with the two roads. The design reflects the principles of site planning set out by Unwin in Town Planning in Practice, and also the influence of Baillie Scott, whose comparable block at the junction of Meadway and Hampstead Way in Hampstead Garden Suburb (now appropriately designated 'Baillie Scott Corner') fulfils a similar townscape function, but is more intricately designed. Bennett and Bidwell seemed to have got everything right here, and there are even surviving original gates to complete the picture. Roughcast walls, multiple projecting gables, the setback end facing Common View is tile hung, with a flare-out over the original front door, brick panel with semicircular arch forms recessed porch for No. 12. Roof sweeps down low on No. 14, which has attractive eyebrow dormer. Dark red plain tiles, original chimneys with corbelled projections and variety of original clay pots. Two of these houses retain their original windows, and the UPVC in No. 14 is not too disruptive. Two original sturdy timber gates survive on the street boundary, together with the original brick retaining wall, albeit affected by settlement. Building of Local Merit, for individual and value as focal point.</i></p>
	3.3	<p><i>The Design Principles for the Heritage Character Area state for Front extensions –</i></p> <p><i>The quality of the original design of these houses contributes to a special Letchworth Garden City street scene. Adding elements, including extensions, to these façades can have an impact on this attractive street scene, particularly on terraced and semi-detached houses.</i></p> <p><i>These proposals will therefore be carefully considered as they can detract from the architectural value of the original and alter the relationship within a group of houses by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• Creating an unsightly or unduly prominent form of development;</i></li> <li><i>• Disrupting the uniformity of the front building line;</i></li> <li><i>• Disrupting the coherence of a group of semi-detached or terraced houses;</i></li> <li><i>• Diluting the 'group value' of a run or cluster of houses.</i></li> </ul>

		<p><i>This is particularly the case with first floor extensions, which can have a serious impact on the original character of the house and the street scene.</i></p> <p><b><i>Front extensions are discouraged</i></b></p>
3.4	<p>Assessing the proposals against the Design Principles clearly shows that the proposals do not comply -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Creating an unsightly or unduly prominent form of development;</i> The proposal cannot be described as unsightly as it references the original building, however it can be described as an unduly prominent form of development. The wide sweeping tile hung roof dominates the rest of the elevation of No.10 completely altering its appearance.</li> <li>• <i>Disrupting the uniformity of the front building line;</i> The proposal engulfs three quarters of the original front elevation at ground and first floor thus losing the uniformity of the original building line to No10 and this unsettles its relationship with No12 and 14. The Architect argues that this proposal overcomes the poor relationship between the two elements of the tile hung gable alongside the white rendered gable but the alternative put forward diminishes the importance of the rendered gable so the perceived unbalance remains in an alternate form. The rendered gable is a constant theme throughout the group which is more important than the tile hung element.</li> <li>• <i>Disrupting the coherence of a group of semi-detached or terraced houses;</i> The original plan shows that the terrace was well designed and balanced. The rendered gable blocks punctuate the design as a common theme which unites the grouping. This would be diluted by the front elevation being brought forward, encompassing the gable and disrupting the balance.</li> <li>• <i>Diluting the 'group value' of a run or cluster of houses.</i> The group value of this is the set piece designed by Bennett and Bidwell. As Mervyn Miller states _ <i>Bennett and Bidwell seemed to have got everything right here, and there are even surviving original gates to complete the picture.</i> As custodians of the Letchworth Garden City, it would be a dereliction of our duties to compromise such an important and effective example of early town planning and Arts and Crafts design.</li> </ul>	
3.5	<p>The proposals whilst beautifully presented proposes a two-storey front extension which whilst referencing the original tilehung element, fails to respect the proportions of the original house and its contribution to the terraced unit and has an impact on the building itself as well as unbalancing the overall grouping.</p>	

<b>4.</b>	<b>Applicant's Comments</b>	
4.1	<p>The applicant has provided a Design and Access Statement in support of the application: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed design cannot be exceptional as it cuts through and diminishes the importance of the gable end which was designed to be an important punctuation point in the terrace. The Architect argues that this proposal overcomes the poor relationship between the two elements of the tile hung gable alongside the white rendered gable, but the alternative put forward diminishes the importance of the rendered gable, so the perceived unbalance remains but in an alternate and arguably weaker form.</li> <li>• The tile hung sweeping section is important but should not take precedence over the original intended design.</li> <li>• Any design can create unintended maintenance issues but should not be derided and decimated for this reason.</li> <li>• The bathroom arrangement with the shared window is an Arts and Crafts detail inherent to many buildings within Letchworth and should not be used as a reason to dramatically alter the building.</li> <li>• The original tile hanging can be carefully removed and insulation can be provided behind this which could easily overcome this issue.</li> <li>• The original design does not have a porch, but the building should not be so dramatically altered to facilitate this.</li> <li>• The loss of the original entrances and gates is also a point that is not included within the reasons for refusal but should nevertheless be considered within the context of Mervyn Miller's description where the original siting of the gates is referred to as an important element of the overall design.</li> <li>• The views expressed about the townscape elements whilst interesting cannot be utilised as a reason for supporting the works to the building. The positioning of the Church does not diminish the importance of the grouping and the historical references to good town planning. This is a dangerous argument which could justify the loss of many good quality buildings for what? The HSI report was prepared circa 2010, almost 50 years after the construction of the Church. If the damage from the siting of the Church was so detrimental to the group it would not have been included in the report.</li> <li>• As in other cases the decision of NHDC is not binding on the HF and in this case, the importance of the building has not been recognised by the Planning Department who were advised at the HF's serious reservations over the proposals.</li> </ul>	
4.2	<p>The Design and Access Statement fails to justify such a drastic alteration to the front elevation that is contrary to the Design Principles and would harm an important set piece of the heritage of Letchworth Garden City.</p>	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	
5.1	<p>The AMC is asked to uphold the refusal of the application.</p>	

## Appendix A – Refusal Letter and HAS Minutes



Our Ref: 37467  
Date: 28<sup>th</sup> July 2021

10 Norton Way North  
Letchworth Garden City  
Hertfordshire  
SG6 1BX

Dear [redacted]

**Two storey front extension, dormer window and new external chimney to side elevation,  
10 Norton Way North, Letchworth Garden City**

The application for the above proposal was considered by the Heritage Advice Service team who took into account all of the issues raised and after careful consideration the decision was to refuse consent for the proposal, as it contravened our Design Principles, for the following reasons:

*Front extensions are discouraged*

*It is preferable for extensions to be on the rear of the property as these normally have a reduced impact on the character of the property and its context; therefore rear additions should be explored in the first instance.*

*Adding elements, including extensions, on these façades can have an impact on this attractive street scene, particularly on terraced and semi-detached houses. These proposals will therefore be carefully considered as they can detract from the architectural value of the original and alter the relationship within a group of houses by:*

- *Disrupting the uniformity of the front building line;*
- *Disrupting the coherence of a group of semi-detached or terraced houses;*
- *Diluting the 'group value' of a run or cluster of houses.*

The property is located in the Heritage Character Area of Letchworth which forms the earliest development of the Garden City. Nos 10-14 Norton Way North forms a terrace of houses which wraps around the corner of Norton Way North and Common View. Designed by Bennet and Bidwell in 1913, the building is also considered to be a Home of Special Interest as it is an important example of early Garden City architecture.

Although the proposal references the Arts and Crafts movement architecturally, it is the loss of the principal elevation that cannot be supported. The terrace is balanced throughout by the strength of the simple rendered gable projections and the proposal would challenge this balanced design, unsettling the whole.

Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation, One Garden City, Broadway, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire SG6 3BF  
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Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation is registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. Registration number: 202198

I know this decision is disappointing, therefore, we would be more than happy to discuss alternatives, to achieve a proposal acceptable to both parties.

Should you not agree with this decision, you may request that your application is reviewed by the Advisory Management Committee, who will report their findings to the Trustees. Should you wish to proceed with this, please ensure that we receive your written confirmation within 6 months of the date of this letter. You may also wish to provide a written statement in support of the review.

Please refer to our website for further information:

[letchworth.com/your-home/application-process](https://letchworth.com/your-home/application-process)

Should you have any further queries, would like to discuss the decision, or amend your proposal please contact me on the number below.

Yours sincerely



Claire Pudney  
Heritage Advice Service Manager  
[home@letchworth.com](mailto:home@letchworth.com)  
Tel: 01462 530335

**HAC MINUTES 22<sup>ND</sup> JULY 2021**

# Meeting Notes

Letchworth  
Garden City  
Heritage Foundation

Subject: Heritage Advice Service Meeting  
Held On: 22nd July 2021  
Attendees:

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Action Who	Action When
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## Extract

### **10 Norton Way North (37467) – Two storey front extension**

CP discussed this case.

- The team agreed that the proposal unbalances the original design and felt that a front extension should not be supported.
- CP advised that NHDC are granting consent.

**The HAS agreed that the application shall be refused.**

CP

## Appendix B – Photographs





**Clutterbuck photograph circa 1920s**

## Appendix C – Request for AMC Review

Letchworth Garden City  
Heritage Foundation  
One Garden City Broadway  
Letchworth Garden City  
SG6 3BF

10 Norton Way North  
Letchworth Garden City  
Hertfordshire  
SG6 1BX

16<sup>th</sup> August 2021

**Re: Extension and alterations to 10 Norton Way North, Letchworth Garden City,  
SG6 1BX**

Dear Tracy Albon,

Thank you for your telephone call today informing me of [redacted] absence from  
the office until 31<sup>st</sup> August.

Further to [redacted] letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> July refusing consent for the above proposal,  
and [redacted] I would like to request a review of that decision by the Advisory  
Management Committee.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course with the details and dates of the process.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

**Statement in support of the front extension to 10 Norton Way North, for the Advisory Management Committee's review into the Heritage Foundation's refused application for consent**

In the illustrated design statement submitted with application, set out in detail the reasons why we feel proposed extension should be considered an exception to the policy of discouraging front extensions. respectfully ask for a careful reading of that document. The letter informing us of the refusal of our application gives the reason, "Front extensions are discouraged."

The "Design Principles for the Heritage Character Area" makes clear that although front extensions are discouraged, there can be exceptions. It goes on to list the qualities such exceptions should possess, as follows:

"Front extensions should be consistent with the character of the original house, utilising the detailing and matching materials, and have balanced proportions and scale."

"Roof pitches can have a substantial impact on the appearance of a building and the street scene. Therefore, all proposed roof pitches and design of the roof and roof line should be consistent with the original roof design of the house."

"Design shall respond to and harmonise with the individual qualities of the host building and its setting."

proposal for an extension would preserve the Arts and Crafts character of the house utilising materials and detailing consistent with this objective. The roof pitches and design of the extension could not be more consistent with the original roof design of the house; it will simply appear as an extrusion to part of the existing roof. The design restores the balance of the terrace and gives it renewed relevance in response to the change in its context, due to the construction of St. George's Church.

The Foundations letter goes on to say, "it is the loss of the principal elevation that cannot be supported."

The value of the principal elevation of our terrace lay in it being the focal point closing off the vista coming down from Eastholm, which was lost in 1963 with the construction of St. George's Church. Prior to this, the tile-hung gable of 10 Norton Way North (NWN) clearly balanced the asymmetries at the other end of the terrace.

The positioning of St. George's was a clever but disruptive piece of urban design that blocked the 10-14 NWN terrace from the space it had created. By doing so, it made the splayed space in front of the terrace subservient to the dominant scale of the church (see Design Statement, Figure 11). The space that had faced north towards the traffic going to the town centre now faced south towards the traffic leaving the town centre.

The new church compromised the legibility of the terrace, giving restricted views of 10 NWN and its tile-hung gable, and giving it an ambivalence within the minor road of Common View.

believe the original design objectives of Bennett and Bidwell have been undermined to such an extent that the current form of the terrace is ill-suited to its radically changed context. Modifying the elevation, as propose, will give new relevance to the terrace and be a positive piece of restorative conservation.

The refusal letter continues: "The terrace is balanced throughout by the strength of the simple rendered gable projections and the proposal would challenge this balanced design, unsettling the whole." We disagree with this assertion. The rendered gables do provide a dominant framework but, while they are symmetrical in plan, they are on a sloping site, which prevents the symmetry from manifesting in three dimensions. Bennett and Bidwell's solution to this was to introduce counterbalancing asymmetries. The asymmetries finally give balance

to the entire design, and the tile-hung gable is the sole asymmetry to the left of the line of symmetry centred on the front door of 12 NWN. By restricting the views of the tile-hung gable, St George's diminished the balance of the elevation Bennet and Bidwell sought. The proposal restores the balance of the elevation by giving the tile-hung gable greater prominence within its new context.

Although the house and its terrace are noted by the Heritage Foundation as being of special architectural or historical interest, it is not a listed building. It is certainly a building with character, and we are very pleased to live in it, but it has flaws, particularly in those parts associated with the tile-hung gable (see Design Statement, "Flaws in the Diamond"). By moving the tile-hung gable forward, we will not only be improving and repairing the urban fabric, we will also be eliminating the historic flaws in the building which manifest in the elevation.

Before submitting the proposal to North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) and the Heritage Foundation, the views of the other residents of the terrace and of [redacted] were sought. None raised any concerns. Indeed, another neighbour knocked on our door after seeing the proposal on the NHDC's website to compliment [redacted] on a proposal that improved rather than detracted from the character of the area. [redacted] is an architect [redacted] had never met before but who nevertheless offered to write a letter in support of the scheme. The NHDC's planning consent to our scheme was given after receiving no comments from the public or consultees. One of the consultees was the Heritage Foundation. No requests were made for any changes to the proposal, and, notably, the house is in the NHDC's conservation area. The Development and Conservation Manager therefore signed their consent.

[redacted] sincerely believe that this proposal will benefit [redacted] house, the terrace, the church, and the local townscape. [redacted] therefore ask the committee to examine the Heritage Foundation's refused consent in light of the reasons outlined in this statement and the design statement included in our proposal.

## Appendix D – Location Plan



10 Norton Way North