

Design and access statement – 12 Fore Street, Hatfield

Development site

12 Fore Street, Hatfield, AL9 5AH

List description

Grade II*

Proposed development

Remove and replace Hertfordshire County Council owned, operated and maintained street lighting and associated brackets, cables and electrical supply.

Assessment of the surroundings of the proposed development

The site is within the Old Hatfield historic core conservation area and on Fore Street, containing 17th, 18th and 19th century buildings of historic interest, formerly the medieval 'Front Street' and the principal road through Old Hatfield and the highest density of listed buildings in Hatfield.

Consultation

We have consulted with the following in the development of these proposals:

Anthony Downs, Estates Director, Gascoyne Cecil Estates (Land and property managers acting on behalf of the Cecil Family on behalf of the Marquess of Salisbury). Gascoyne Estates also manages other buildings in Fore Street.

Peter Hebden County Councillor Hatfield East since 2021 and prior to May 2021, County Councillor Susie Gordon.

Peter Hebden, local Councillor for Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and Deputy Mayor.

Dr Jonathan Fisher, Old Hatfield Residents Association, 32 Park Close, Old Hatfield, Herts AL9 5AY

Other property owners in the area and Hertfordshire County Council.

Evaluation

The existing street light is visually unappealing, unmaintainable (due to obsolete components), inefficient, creates unnecessary light pollution and unsafe by present standards.

Tax payer funding through Hertfordshire County Councils programme of LED street lighting replacement gives the opportunity to replace the existing light and associated bracket and cable with a new unit more in keeping with it's surroundings.

Design components

Proposed use remains as a street light lighting the public highway.

The light proposed is a heritage style matching the light on the nearby Arm and Sword Lane development and identical to the light in St Etheldreda's Churchyard.

The bracket and lantern proposed are new, with a design life of twenty years. It is likely the light and bracket will be fully functioning for many years after that, as evidenced by similar lights in the County.

Once installed the light will be lower maintenance, consume less energy and carbon than before and be remotely controlled and dimmable giving flexibility of function not possible with the existing fitting for years to come.

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A shield will be fitted to the back of the lantern to reduce light on the building façade. Should they be requested by residents a front shield can also be fitted.

Part of the proposal is to move the safe isolation point from the building to a feeder pillar at ground level this improves the safety of maintenance to the light and to the general public.

Layout

The light unit and bracket replaces the one already in the location.

A new feeder pillar will be located at ground level directly below the vertical cable running up the wall.

Scale

The dimensions of the proposed light and bracket are in keeping with the surrounding area.

Appearance

The proposed light and bracket takes heed of the historic nature of the surrounding area, in a style appropriate for the location and in our opinion, and those we have consulted with, a betterment to the existing street scene. The chosen style and colour are traditional to enhance the appeal of the area yet understated and sharing the same look as other proposed lights on 18 and 30 Fore Street.

Historic and special architectural importance of the building

From Historic England website:

Late C18 red brick house. Plain tile gable end roof. 2 storeys, basement and attic. 5 recessed sash windows with glazing bars and louvred C18 shutters. Protective iron grills to basement windows. Adam style doorcase has double doors with large fielded panels and ornate radiating fan. Fielded reveals and three-quarter fluted columns with lotus type capitals. Frieze has husk festoons and paterae. Dentilled pediment. 5 2-light box casement dormers. Rear elevation ground floor has half glazed door flanked by shallow multi-pane bows. Long rear W side extension terminating in square block with pyramid roof, adjoining which are C18 square gate piers with stone finials of bishop's mitres flanking a wrought iron gate. Interior has entrance hall with late C18 screen with fluted Doric pilasters. Rear staircase hall with barley twist balusters.

The replacement lighting does not impact the building frontage as work is to the rear of the property. Pictured below.

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Setting

The replacement light is to the rear of the property on a track away from Fore Street itself. Nearest sightline is from four residential properties at The Close and Gatehouse Cottage, outbuildings, foliage and walls obstruct a direct view of the light.

Access

There is no change to issues in relation to past, present, future or emergency access requirements, nor is this considered relevant to the application.

Relevant Policies

Place Services (2019) Hatfield Heritage Assessment.

This document identifies the area of Fore Street Hatfield as highly important due to the density and composition of listed buildings including the Grade II* listed 12 Fore Street (Goodrich House). As the street lighting on this important building is to the rear it does not feature in the listing (see Historic and special architectural importance of the building) and will not impact the key characteristics of Fore Street from a visual or historic sense.

English Heritage (2008) Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance. This proposal draws on the opportunity to improve the aesthetic value of the area while maintaining a vital civic amenity that is life expired. We consider the new fitting to be more authentic in the setting than the light it replaces. We have not found any reference to the street lighting when reviewing the documents. The light, bracket and cable can be safely removed if so desired.

Historic England (2018) Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places. The street lighting is chosen in line with Hertfordshire County Council policy for 'no worse than before' lighting' and the drive to reduce energy consumption, carbon emissions and lower maintenance burden through the replacement of street lighting to LED and central management. The light is a 3000K colour temperature a warm white with the facility to add shading for avoiding light pollution. Replacing the light on the building wall will additionally keep clutter to a minimum. The equipment is durable, easily maintained and visually pleasing. The street cabinet (feeder pillar) proposed is as

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small as is possible in a vandal resistant metal casing, it is necessary to house the distribution network operator supply that is on the wall at present, this is not safe for maintenance.

The pillar is painted black as per other components in the system to minimise the visual impact.