Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

18 July 2023

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Officer's Title: Planning Officer

Application No: **PL/2023/05878 & PL/2023/05218**
Improvements to boundary wall, entrance wall and gates.
Abbotsbury, 164 Westbury Leigh, Westbury, BA13 3SH

Please find following comments in respect of the above application(s).

Recommendations:

X	Comment (for reasons set out below)
	Support
	Support subject to conditions (please set out below)
	Object (for reasons set out below)
	No objections

Scope of comments: the following comments relate to the built historic environment.

Policy: From the point of view of the historic environment the main statutory tests are set out within the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Sections 16 (LBC) and 66 (PP) require that **special regard** be given to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

The NPPF outlines government policy, including its policy in respect of the historic environment. Section 16 of the NPPF 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the Government's high-level policies concerning heritage and sustainable development. Paragraphs 201-3 of the NPPF require a balanced approach with any harm which would be caused being weighed against the potential public benefits which might be achieved. Paragraph 197 requires local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

The Council's Core Strategy 'Core Policy 58: Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment' requires that designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved and where possible enhanced. It is also required that distinctive elements of Wiltshire's historic environment, including non-designated heritage assets, which contribute to a sense of local character and identity will be conserved, and where possible enhanced.

The Council's Core Strategy CP 57: Ensuring high quality design requires a high quality of design in all new developments. Proposals are required to "demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire through:

i. enhancing local distinctiveness by responding to the value of the natural and historic environment, relating positively to its landscape setting and the existing pattern of development…
ii. the retention and enhancement of existing important landscaping and natural features…
iii. responding positively to the existing townscape and landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate the building into its setting.

Site: The property is a Grade II listed building and also the listing includes the south west front boundary wall

Proposal: The proposal seeks improvements to the boundary wall, entrance wall and new gates.

Relevant planning history:

Issues: Impact on the significance of the listed building

Assessment: Paragraph 194 requires that applicants describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. This should include sufficient information to provide a clear understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and its setting and the potential impact of any proposals on that significance. In this case, the applications are accompanied by a "Design, Access and Heritage Statement" which provides sufficient information to understand the impact of the proposals and is proportionate to their scope. The requirements of the NPPF are therefore met in this respect.

The proposed works relate to the existing boundary walls and driveway.

In principle the proposed works may be considered acceptable, however clarity is needed on a number of points:

- Whether it is proposed to attach the new wall and railings to the existing south west wall?
- Treatment of the driveway?
- Whether any alterations are proposed to the existing south west wall?
- Whether any expansion joints or weep holes are proposed to the wall?
- Whether the coping stone is natural stone?

In regard to the design of the proposed entrance gates, these are considered over ornate with double finials and circular details. A simpler design of gate is preferred without ornate details.

Summary & conclusion: The NPPF confirms that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). It makes clear that any harm to a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification.

As such, further details and amendments are requested before a detailed heritage assessment is carried out.