CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference: **2023/05965**
Date of Inspection: **n/a**
Date site notice posted: **Erected by agent**
Date of press notice: **17.8.23**

SITE ADDRESS: **42 – 44 Chipper Lane, Salisbury, SP1 1BG**
PROPOSAL: **Installation of solar panels and a safety guarding around such at roof level.**

POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and NPPG

Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS):

Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy and Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy
Core Policy 20: Spatial Strategy: Salisbury Community Area
Core Policy 22: Salisbury Skyline
Core Policy 41: Sustainable construction and low carbon energy
Core Policy 49: Protection of Services and Community Facilities
Core Policy 57: Ensuring high quality design and place shaping
Core Policy 58: Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 66: Special considerations affecting planning functions
Section 72: General duties of planning authorities

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Salisbury City Council – No comment to make on this application

Conservation Officer -The proposed solar panels and enclosing railings would be above the 12.2m height limit for development in the city; it is no accident that the existing building is 12m. The purpose of the policy is to protect both views of the cathedral and the roofscape of the city. I am conscious that this particular building does have some taller buildings in its vicinity, and that possibly the panels would be sufficiently screened to consider allowing the proposal despite the policy. They would need to be undetectable from Endless St, Salt Lane and Chipper Lane; they are also likely to be visible from the ring road. They would certainly be visible from the cathedral tower, but in the context of that distant view I consider that any harm to its setting to be negligible.

To establish the degree to which they might be visible, and whether revisions may reduce this, I would suggest that temporary posts (or flags or similar) to the height of the railings proposed) with a bright marker on top be placed in the corner positions for a day or period to be agreed, so that I can see for myself.

Comments following site visit to view guard rails in situ.

No objection - Further to the erection of a temporary replica railing, I have reviewed its visibility both in person and from photographs and am satisfied that the proposal is acceptable. While above the height limit, the railings appear only to be visible from the ring road, where they are viewed against the taller buildings to the north (the cinema and BT building). The static nature and modest additional height of the railings and panels, and the public benefits of the panels, weigh in their favour over any other potential rooftop developments.

REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

ASSESSMENT

Planning considerations:

Permission was sought, and approved, in 2023 under reference 2023/02891 for Prior approval Part 3 Class O: Offices to dwellinghouses at the application site. This application was approved, and followed a series of applications to provide additional fenestration to the building to ensure natural light was available to all habitable rooms in the proposed conversion to dwellings.

The current proposal is to install a series of solar panel on the flat roof of the building, and for safety reasons to construct a guard rail around these panels.

The existing building the subject of this application is located in the centre of Salisbury, approximately 125m north of the Guildhall and Market Place. It is situated on the south side and eastern end of Chipper Lane, at the junction of Chipper Lane, Salt Lane and Endless Street.
The property is situated in the Salisbury Conservation area. The property is not listed although the adjoining buildings in Chipper Lane and Endless Street are listed.
The overall property consists of a 3 storey (ground plus two upper floors) split floor-level building.

At ground level are 3no commercial premises which are accessed via Endless Street. These consist Chris White Funeral Directors (15 Endless Street), who also occupy the double-height yard area which is accessed off Chipper Lane, Elite Tailoring (15A Endless Street) and a vacant unit on the corner of Endless Street / Chipper Lane, formerly occupied by The Karma Centre (48 Chipper Lane)

The property would appear to have been constructed around the 1980's and consists of extensive glazed shopfronts at ground floor level, with face brickwork and vertical glazing units (incorporating brick infill panels) up to eaves level, above which is a tiles pitched perimeter roof slope and flat roof behind. The only variation to this is around the service yard entrance on Chipper Lane, which has tile hanging to the elevation above the loading door and 4 dormer windows set in the pitched roof element. Consent has been granted to slightly amend the appearance of the exterior of the building and to install additional glazing in the mansard roof facing Chipper Lane, with less intrusive amendments facing Endless Street under ref. no 2022/08729. Work has commenced on the conversion of the building to flats.

The current proposal is to install solar panels to provide energy to the flats, and to construct a guard rail around them fort he safety of anyone working on the site.

The site lies within the Salisbury Conservation Area and Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on the local planning authority, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

The NPPF states:

194. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.

195. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

199. 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). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Core Policy 57 sets out the criteria for good design and use of materials. Core Policy 58 aims to ensure that Wiltshire's important monuments, sites and landscapes and areas of historic and built heritage significance are protected and enhanced in order that they continue to make an important contribution to Wiltshire's environment and quality of life. Heritage assets include listed buildings and conservation areas. Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment. Designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Policy CP 22 (Salisbury Skyline) seeks to ensure that any development within the city centre is not in excess of 12.2 m in height to protect views of the Cathedral. The guard rails exceed this height and the applicant has installed temporary guard rails to enable an assessment to be made of the impact of this feature on views across the city. The Conservation Officer has viewed the site from a series of different locations and has concluded that the guard rails and solar panels will be hardly visible and will not have an adverse impact on views to the cathedral, and therefore has no objection to the scheme, as set out in his comments above.

The scheme also complies with the thrust of policy CP41 in that it is providing energy from a low carbon source to the building, and meets the Council's objectives regarding reacting to the climate emergency by reducing emissions from energy production.

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CONCLUSION

The panels and guard rails will not have an adverse impact on the character of the conservation area and will assist in the Council's aims at reacting to the climate emergency. It is therefore recommended that the application is approved, subject to conditions below.

RECOMMENDATION:
Grant subject to conditions.

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
Block and Location Plan – Drawing number 8479 101, received on 18th July 2023
Proposed Elevations - Drawing number 1435/11, received on 18th July 2023
Existing and Proposed Roof Plan – Drawing number 1435/10, received on 18th July 2023

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.