CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/07402
Application Type:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
Site Inspection:	
Consultation ends:	05 October 2023
Case officer:	Fiona Webb

Site Address:	Silverwood School, Rowde, Devizies, SN10 2QQ
Proposal:	Removal of decayed, corroded, painted metal fire escape stairs and replacement with new galvanised, acid etched and epoxy painted steel fire escape stairs
Recommendation:	Approve with Conditions

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.

Site: The site is a Grade II listed building built in 1812. It has a very formal South Elevation (front) on raised plinth is ordered with Ionic pilasters dividing the marginally recessed central bay from 2 side bays, panelled band to each side and moulded cornice.

Proposal: The proposal seeks the removal of a C20, decayed, corroded, painted metal fire escape stairs and replacement with new galvanised, acid etched and epoxy painted steel fire escape stairs

Relevant planning history: None

Issues: Impact on the significance of the Grade II 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 application is accompanied by a “Design and Access Statement” which provides sufficient information to understand the impact of the proposal and is proportionate to the scope. The requirements of the NPPF are therefore met in this respect.

However, paragraph 195 also provides for the local planning authority to make its own assessment of impact and the following heritage recommendations are offered on this basis.

The existing painted metal staircase was probably installed as a fire stair some fifty years ago at the corner of North and East elevations. It has corroded, partly broken and become dangerous. It is also not compliant with Building Regulations. The corroded stairs have been considered unsafe by Fire Officer.

The proposed schedule of works will include:

1. Remove existing, inadequate foundations.
2. Provide 4No. Concrete pad foundation footings 450mm deep in C30 concrete, below each of ground beams. Coordinate with existing drainage and adjust as needed.
3. Ground beams to be installed in steel grade S275, blast cleaned to S2.5 and zinc rich primed, cased in mass concrete and external floor finishes fully reinstated (after installation of the stairs).
4. Flaky paint to be removed from the elevations using steam only. No abrasive or chemical methods to be used.
5. Any damage to the elevations to be made good and repointed using NHL 3.5 lime mortar.
6. Elevations to be prepared for painting and repainted with Keim Soldalit ME – Mineral Paint System in accordance with manufacturer’s instruction. Walls to be in colour no. 9317 and plinth in colour no.9008 (both to match existing).
7. Install new, galvanized steel staircase, acid etched and epoxy painted in RAL 9001, matt, (metal colour matching Keim colour no. 9317) in full compliance with Building Regulations. Any fixings into the brick to be carried out with s/s fixings.

It is considered that the proposed new staircase would provide a safe, high quality, fire escape staircase to the school building. The proposal will preserve the Listed Building in line with conservation legislation and guidance given in National Planning Policy Framework.

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.

The impact of the proposals on heritage assets will be neutral and the requirements of current conservation legislation, policy or guidance are considered to be met and there is therefore no objection to the approval of the application.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:
Rowde Parish Council – No comments received

REPRESENTATIONS:
None

RECOMMENDATION:
Consent

REASON FOR GRANTING ~~PERMISSION/~~CONSENT/~~REFUSAL~~:
The proposed works would preserve the special historic interest of the heritage asset in accordance with Sections 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990 and NPPF section 16, because these works would have no detrimental impact on the historic fabric and would be of an appropriate material and detailing.

Conditions: (2)

1 The works for which Listed Building Consent is hereby granted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2 The works hereby granted consent shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents: Location Plan – dated 31/08/2023 Block Plan – dated 5/09/2023 Existing North East and South West Elevation – dated 5/0/2023 Existing South East and North West Elevation – dated 5/09/2023 Existing Floor Plan and Site Plan – dated 5/09/2023 Proposed North East and South West Elevation – dated 5/0/2023 Proposed South East and North West Elevation – dated 5/09/2023 Proposed Floor Plan and Site Plan – dated 5/09/2023 Proposed Ground Floor Plan – dated 5/09/2023 REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of the significance of the heritage asset and its setting.