CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/10447
Application Type:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
Site Inspection:	
Consultation ends:	06 May 2024
Case officer:	Fiona Webb

Site Address:	3 Maryport Street, Devizes, Wilts, SN10 1AH
Proposal:	Stone work repairs from ground to first floor level
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 or enhancing listed buildings, their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 also requires the Council to pay **special attention** to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of designated Conservation Areas.

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 207-9 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 203 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.

National Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on interpreting the NPPF.

The Council's Core Strategy Policy CP58 'Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment' requires that "designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner appropriate to their significance."
Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy Policy CP57 'Ensuring high quality design and place shaping': A high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings. Development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality.

Site and assets considered: The property is a Grade II listed building located in Devizes Conservation Area. The property also affects the setting of numerous neighbouring listed buildings.

Proposal: The proposal seeks to carryout stone work repairs from ground to first floor level of the building.

Relevant planning history: N/A

Issues: impact on the significance of the listed building, impact on the setting of neighbouring listed buildings, impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Information considered/provided: Paragraph 200 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, Access and Heritage Statement" which provides sufficient information to understand the impact of the proposal and is proportionate to their scope. The requirements of the NPPF are therefore met in this respect.

However, paragraph 201 also provides for the local planning authority to make its own assessment of impact and the following heritage recommendations are offered on this basis.

Significance of assets and contribution of setting: The NPPF defines significance as the "value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be **archaeological**, **architectural**, **artistic** or **historic**. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting." Historic England assesses significance in a similar manner, referring to evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal values of a place.

In this case the significance of the building lies largely with its historic fabric and architecture - its form, layout and architectural expression/detailing and use of high-quality design materials which have significant aesthetic and architectural interest and which contribute to the character of the conservation area.

Assessment: The property has an 18th Century front with possibly an earlier building behind. It is three storeys stucco faced with the upper floors flanked by Doric pilasters on moulded bases. The upper areas have reeded eaves with a low pitch gable end slate roof.

The front façade is made up of bath stone masonry elements which are showing signs of major erosion and weathering. The stone decay is most likely due to poor weathering detail, allowing the rain to run across the surface eroding the stonework. The ground floor stones are noticeably eroded.

It is proposed to replace the very heavily eroded bath stone with matching material and detailing, to use 'nano lime' to solidify all other areas of eroded stonework in order to prevent further deterioration, and in deeper areas of repairs to use mortar capping to preserve as much as the bath stone as possible. A photographic survey has been submitted and identifies areas of stonework replacement, in addition a building condition survey has been submitted and a method statement.

In conservation terms the repairs are considered essential in nature to maintain the building in a good structural condition and to prevent the stonework from further decay. The works will retain the integrity and design of the listed building and ensure its future use.

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:
Devizes Town Council – No objection

REPRESENTATIONS:
None

RECOMMENDATION:
Consent

REASON FOR GRANTING ~~PERMISSION/~~CONSENT/~~REFUSAL~~:
The works as carried out preserve the special historic interest of the heritage assets in accordance with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990 and NPPF section 16, because these works are considered an appropriate form and detailing.

Conditions: (3)

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 development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:
Location Plan – dated 30/11/2023
Annotated Photographic Schedule - dated 3/04/2024

Stone Condition Report – dated 3/04/2024
Methodology Report – dated 3/04/2024

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

3 The natural stonework to be used externally on the proposed development shall match that of the existing building in terms of type, colour, size, dressing and bedding of stone, coursing, type of pointing and mortar mix.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.