

APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

OFFICER DELGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/09522
APPLICATION TYPE:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
SITE ADDRESS:	The Georgian Lodge, 25 Bridge Street, Bradford on Avon, BA15 1BY
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Proposal is to install a new Openreach 'fibre node box' on the right-side wall of the building.
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The Georgian Lodge, No.25 Bridge Street, Bradford-on-Avon is a grade II listed building dating from the 18th century. It is a fine example of a formal, higher-status 3-storey Georgian townhouse, with Ashlar frontage and rubblestone side elevations. It is located in a prominent location within the Bradford-on-Avon Conservation Area.

The list entry, for means of identification purposes only, provides the following description:

C18. Ashlar frontage, modern pantile roof, 3 storeys. Plain parapet with plain string under on cut stone brackets. Plain strings at sill levels, heavily moulded and dentilled cornice at second floor level with cut stone brackets under. 5 windows with architrave surrounds. Sashes, glazing bars intact. Central doorway with semi-circular head, fanlight with glazing bars, keystone and moulded imposts. Deep roll bolection moulding around door-head and down jambs to base blocks. Stone doorcase with Tuscan half-columns and entablature. 8 panelled door. To left of doorway, sash window with glazing bars and semi-circular headed opening with keystone to left again. To right of doorway, sash window with glazing bars and semi-circular recess, with a further sash window with glazing bars to right again.

Nos 12 to 14 (consec), Nos 16 to 25 (consec), the Old Forge Bridge Street and Nos 1 and 2 St Margaret's Street form a group.

PROPOSAL

Proposal is to install a new Openreach 'fibre node box' on the right-side wall of the building.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Legislation

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. Section 16 requires 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.

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.

National Policy and Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out government policy, including 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 213-215 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 210 requires local planning authorities to 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.

Section 14 of the NPPF addresses the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change.

National Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on interpreting the NPPF.

Historic England Advice Note 2: Making changes to Heritage Assets, illustrates the application of policies set out in the NPPF in determining applications for LBC (and planning permission).

Wiltshire Core Strategy:

Whilst not directly relevant to listed building consent applications, the below policies give an indication of the Council's approach to development affecting heritage assets:

- Core Policy 57 '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.
- Core Policy 58 '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."

ISSUES

- Impact upon the preservation of the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural and/or historic interest.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Bradford-on-Avon Town Council – no objection.

REPRESENTATIONS

In accordance with the requirements of Section 5(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 (as amended) the application for listed building consent was publicised by way of:

- A site notice displayed near the site;
- An advertisement placed in the local press.

These methods were used to inform interested parties and to allow a statutory consultation period of **21 days** for representations to be submitted.

Below is a summary of the representations received during the consultation period. In accordance with the provisions of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, only matters relevant to the consideration of the building's special architectural or historic interest have been taken into account in the assessment of this Listed Building Consent application.

- Bradford-on-Avon Preservation Trust: We have no objection as there would be no harm to the character of the listed building.

ASSESSMENT

In accordance with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, special regard has been given to the significance of the listed building, including its architectural and historic interest, and the desirability of preserving both the building and its setting. Relevant policies within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, have also been taken into account. These policies require that any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset must be clearly justified and weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

In order to be acceptable, the application needs to be assessed against the following criteria:

Information considered/submitted

Paragraph 207 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.

- Heritage Statement and Design and Access Statement

Paragraph 208 also provides for the local planning authority to make its own assessment of impact and the following heritage recommendations are offered on this basis.

Assessment of significance:

According to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), significance is defined 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 further categorises significance into four key values:

- *Evidential* – the potential of the asset to yield evidence about past human activity.
- *Historic* – the ways in which the asset illustrates aspects of history.
- *Aesthetic* – the sensory and design qualities of the asset.
- *Communal* – the meanings and associations attached to the asset by people.

In this case the significance of the building lies largely with its architectural qualities and design as a traditional Georgian Townhouse, and its materials that are typical of the locality.

Impact of proposals on the significance and setting of the building/structure:

Understanding the impact of proposed works on a listed building requires a careful and proportionate assessment of how those changes affect the asset's heritage significance and its setting. This includes both the physical alterations to the building itself and any changes to its spatial or visual relationship with surrounding structures or spaces.

The significance of a heritage asset is not static; it is shaped by its architectural, historic, and communal values, and by how these are experienced in context. Therefore, any intervention must be considered in light of the asset's identified significance, with attention given to both potential harm and benefits. Benefits may include repairs that support the long-term conservation of the building, improved energy performance, or enhanced public access and understanding.

This assessment is grounded in the statutory duty under Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which requires special regard to be given to the desirability of preserving the building and its features of special interest. It is also informed by national policy, particularly paragraphs 199–208 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and relevant local heritage policies and guidance.

The application is for the installation of a second 'fibre node box' to be positioned on the side elevation of the building, adjacent to the existing box. This is required to provide updated broadband connection within the building to those occupants who require it – the building has a number of units within it, each with a separate connection to the internet. The existing box is to remain, as anyone within the building who does not wish to transfer over to the new fibre will still need this line and connection.

The proposed external broadband unit is a fairly standard fitting to buildings to allow connectivity to the internet, as part of modern-day services now form part of everyday life in the 21st century. It is particularly important to provide such services, to enable people to stay connected and supported within their homes and businesses via the internet, in order to access the internet for various reasons, from general communication, the ability to work from home to medical requirements and business support.

The external box is therefore no different nowadays to gas supply boxes, television aerials and electric lights when they were first invented and introduced into the home.

These boxes can usually be located and fixed to the building relatively low down and discreetly, however in this instance, the box will be more prominent location part way up the building's side elevation, next to an existing box of similar size. This is due to the adjoining property's roof and the upper floors being separate residential units.

Whilst not the location is not particularly sympathetic, and there is the potential for a negative cumulative impact resulting from the presence of more than one box, the reasons why this location is proposed is understood, due to restrictions on the access and cabling route runs required.

There is potential for some visual harm to the building, however the benefits for providing access to internet services is a benefit for occupants of the building. Overall harm to significance, however, is somewhat negligible in this instance.

CONCLUSION

The overall impact of the proposals on heritage assets will be relatively neutral, and will not cause harm to the building's overall special interest. The requirements of current conservation legislation, policy and guidance are considered to be met.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Listed Building Consent be GRANTED, subject to the following conditions:

- Standard 3 year time limit,
- Approved plans.