

Heritage - Statement of Significance

Job Number: 3M-447

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Significance (SoS) has been prepared by Three Magnets Planning on behalf of Abode & Co Holdings, who are seeking full planning permission for the construction of additional storey of residential accommodation (C3) comprises 6 flats at St Paul's House, 1 Marshfield Road, Chippenham, SN15 1LA.
- 1.2 This statement of significance should be read in conjunction with the other documents submitted with this application. It sets out the policy and guidance context, the heritage assets near the proposed site, describes the proposed development and analysis of the impact of the proposal on the significance.

Policy & Guidance

- 1.3 Planning for the historic environment is a key part of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024). When a proposal affects a heritage asset, the NPPF (2024) states the following at Paragraph 207:

"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. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation."

- 1.4 Regarding local policy, Wiltshire Core Strategy Core Policy 58 Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment aims to ensure that Wiltshire's important monuments, sites and landscapes and areas of historic and built heritage significance are protected and enhanced. Core Policy 58 states that *"Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment"*.
- 1.5 Historic England have produced a series of Good Practice Advice (GPAs) documents and Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs). The GPAs address plan-making and decision-taking, whilst HEANs cover various planning topics in more detail.

Existing Heritage Assets

- 1.6 There are five heritage assets within reasonable proximity of the development site.

- List Entry Number: 1267956 – Railway Viaduct – Grade II Listed

“Railway viaduct. Opened 1841. Mainly by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, widened later. Limestone ashlar to the north side, English-bond brick to the south with a stepped ashlar cornice and parapet to both facades including the piers. Vermiculated rustication to the plinth. 3 semicircular-arched openings to the original structure; the north facade has a tall central road arch with a keystone reaching to the parapet, flanked by lower narrower arches to the footpath. To the east a thick coped retaining wall to the embankment ramps up from a square pier at street level to meet a curved pier at the cornice. A similar pier to the west end is connected to another later brick arcade of 5 full-height arches with a lower one to the west making 9 arches in all. The brick south side is similar but plain. The pier to the east end curves forward to meet a similar embankment retaining wall. The arches to the west enclose huge vaulted spaces, 2 with rows of harnessing rings to each side, one with an axial division of rubblestone. HISTORY: a lithograph of 1842 shows the north facade as having a classical cornice, the present one may be later. One of the notable monuments on Brunel's main line of the Great Western Railway. (Chamberlain, Joseph A: Chippenham: Chippenham: 1976-: 3).”

- List Entry Number: 1267998 – Vine Cottage, 8 Marshfield Road – Grade II Listed

“House. Late C18. Limestone rubble, freestone quoins and dressings, half-hipped stone slate gambrel roof with 2 brick stacks to rear. Double-depth plan. EXTERIOR: 2 storeys with attic; symmetrical 3-window range. Three C20 raking dormers; 6/6-pane sash windows in plain ashlar surrounds, that to the 1st-floor centre is small. A pediment with reeded edges on brackets is over a C20 door. INTERIOR: not inspected”.

- List Entry Number: 1267922 – 1 and 2 St Paul Street – Grade II Listed

“Pair of semi-detached houses. Mid C19. Limestone ashlar, hipped slate roof with wide eaves and moulded ashlar ridge stack to party wall. Double-depth plan. EXTERIOR: 2 storeys; symmetrical 4-window range. Rusticated pilasters to quoins and party wall, raised surrounds to 6/6-pane sash windows without horns, doors to outer ends, C19 to the left (No.2), C20 to the right, both with overlights and shallow hoods on brackets. INTERIOR: not inspected”.

- List Entry Number: 1267953 – 46 and 47 New Road – Grade II Listed

“Pair of houses. Mid C19. Limestone ashlar, fully-hipped slate roof with a moulded stack to the apex. Double-depth plans. EXTERIOR: 2 storeys with basements; symmetrical block, each house is 2-window range. Eaves band, plinth and pilasters to corners and party wall; stone mullions to 2-light openings to the basement. The outer ranges have steps up to doors which have overlights and shallow hoods on brackets. No.46 to the right has plate-glass sash windows and a C20 door. No.47 has 6/6-pane sash windows and a 4-panel door glazed to the top. INTERIOR: not inspected. One of a group of houses in New Road built after the arrival of the railway in 1840-41”.

- Chippenham Conservation Area.

- 1.7 St Paul's House is located within the Chippenham Conservation Area. The Chippenham Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies St Pauls House within the Marshfield Road sub area and classifies the building as poor townscape merit and identifies it as a negative focal point in local views.

Details of the proposal

- 1.8 The proposal is for the construction of an additional storey of accommodation on the existing building. This will replace the existing plant structure. The application is formally described as:

"Construction of additional storey of residential accommodation (C3) comprises 6 flats with associated external works, parking, cycle and refuse storage".

- 1.9 The proposal provides for 6 no residential units. Each dwelling has its own parking accessed from the existing access and associated bin and bike storage. The proposed works also includes; the replacement of all existing external windows, from poor quality single glazed aluminium windows to UPVC windows, with the introduction of UPVC rainwater pipes, hoppers, and solar PV panels on to the proposed roof surface.

Analysis of the impact of the proposal on the significance

- 1.10 The proposal is for the construction of one additional storey of accommodation on the existing building and minor external works to improve the quality and appearance of the building. The proposal replaces an existing roof plant structure located on the roof of the building.
- 1.11 The existing building envelope is to be retained, with Ashlar Stone kept as the external facade. The additional fourth floor extension fabric is to be a contrasting aluminium panel cladding, in grey. This draws on local precedents and provides a clear distinction between original and new addition. The material choice is considered a sympathetic approach that considers the local context but also contributes to the varying architectural diversity of the area.
- 1.12 Overall, the proposal at St Paul's House is not considered too strongly alter the existing baseline position e.g. a building that is considered a poor contribution to the townscape. The proposal seeks to improve the quality of the existing building to ensure a minor enhancement to the character of the conservation area. It is therefore considered that the proposed development causes no adverse impact upon any element which contributes to the special architectural or historical interest of the identified assets.
- 1.13 It is concluded that the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding area, or indeed the heritage assets identified. The proposal accords with relevant guidance and policy at both National and Local Level and as such it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in heritage terms.