

APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

OFFICER DELGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/00906
APPLICATION TYPE:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
SITE ADDRESS:	76a High Street, Marlborough , SN8 1HF
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Installation of fibre internet box and cable
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

No.76A is a grade II listed building dating from as early as the 15th century, with 17th, 18th and early 19th century evolutions. It is technically part of No.76 and covered by the listing of the latter, the description noting that the building was originally one house, which later became two houses, then back to one. In 1990, the building was turned into two houses, and it has been that way since, hence 'No.76A'. The front elevation has two bay shop windows, yet the building has been in residential use for many years. It is located within the Marlborough Conservation Area and is in a row of grade II listed building, and opposite the grade II* listed St Paul's Church.

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

House, later two houses, then house again. Probably C15, C17, C18, early C19. Partly timber framed with brick front and rear walls rendered front. Welsh slate to front slope, plain tiles to rear. Two room plan with central entrance, at some time in the C18 divided into two cottages with entry off central passage, later restored as one house; C18 rear wing and small C19 extension. Main elevation Early C19 in character. Three storeys. Ground floor rusticated with plain band above. Two projecting shop windows with glazing bars, one canted, one bow; one fixed window with glazing bars (in former doors), one plank door. First and second floors have two ranges of sashes with glazing bars in moulded stucco frames; nine pane to first floor, six pane to second floor. Brick ridge stack.

Interior: At west end between Nos 75 and 76 is a medieval timber framed closed truss probably of cruck construction. This may be a survivor of a previous building now flanked by later buildings or No 76 may yet incorporate other contemporary material not now visible. It has slightly cambered tie-beam, convex brace, queen struts and a slightly cambered collar, the top of an apparent cruck is also visible. The C17 house had kitchen to the left and parlour to the right with cellar under. Timber framed partition walls, chamfered beams, newel stair, fireplace with eared surround on the first floor, interior otherwise altered by conversion to two cottages in C18 and conversion back.

PROPOSAL

Installation of external fibre internet box and cable, to front elevation.

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.

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

Marlborough 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:

None received.

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.

- Design, Access and Heritage Statement

The information within the submitted DAS is adequate and proportionate to address the impact of the specific proposals.

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 traditional architectural character and materials, as a vernacular building of timber frame construction. It has evidential value of former a former commercial building, with shop windows, that yields evidence of previous activity in this part of the town centre. An historic building dating from the 15th century, it has a fine front elevation that positively contributes as part of the wider group of listed buildings in this part of the Marlborough Conservation Area.

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 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 in rural areas, to enable people to stay connected and supported within their homes via the internet, in order to access the internet for various reasons, from general communication, the ability to work from home to medical requirements.

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 on a relatively unaltered front elevation. It can be fitted at a low level, below the shop window, and the application states that it will be painted to match the render upon which it's mounted.

Whilst the location is not particularly sympathetic, the reasons why this location is the only realistic option is understood for this town location, due to the continuous row of houses directly fronting the pavement.

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.

Impact on Ecology

While Sections 16 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 do not explicitly reference protected species, Local Planning Authorities have a statutory duty to consider potential impacts on protected species when determining applications. This responsibility arises from broader environmental legislation and national planning policy, and must be taken into account where relevant.

		Y / N / NA
(a)	Does the site or proposed development possess/impact on any of the features where protected species are likely to be present (assessed against Natural England's standing advice) and where species are likely to be found?	N
(b)	If yes, has a protected species survey been submitted?	
(c)	If yes, does the survey show a detailed consideration of ecological impacts, wildlife mitigation and the creation, restoration and enhancement of wildlife corridors to preserve and enhance biodiversity in accordance with the standing advice?	

Comments (if any):

N/A

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.

In this case, the impact of the proposal on the designated heritage assets will be relatively neutral yet will be a benefit to the occupants to enable connectivity to the internet and associated benefits this will bring the household.

RECOMMENDATION:

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

- Time limit
- Plans ref