

APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

OFFICER DELGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/01246
APPLICATION TYPE:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
SITE ADDRESS:	Littlefield House, Bath Road, Marlborough, SN8 1NN
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	External repointing works to rear courtyard elevations only.
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

Littlefield is a grade II listed building dating from the 1870s, by renowned Victorian architect G. E. Street. Overtly Victorian in style and character, its main interest lies in the building's construction method, a very early use of concrete using shuttering methods to raise the elevations. A contemporary part of the building burnt down and was replaced with a modernist 1960s dormitory wing, in a 'New Brutalist' manner.

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

1870 (designed). 1871-2 built. Architect G E Street. Built in concrete to the patent method of Charles Drake, who lectured on it to the Civil and Mechanical Engineers Society in 1875 (reported in Building News 25 June 1875). A very early use of concrete indeed, with flint aggregate and lump chalk packing. Cement rendering, A little tile-hanging under eaves, but otherwise no attempt to conceal the material. Brick strings at plinth and 1st floor sill level. Pitched tile roofs. Tall brick stacks with elaborate corning.

3 storeys and basements. Study and dormitory wing to west was formerly the mirror image of that to east of Cotton House, but was burned down and rebuilt in a subdued New Brutalist manner circa 1960.

Remainder on irregular plan, each part with its own pitched roof. Very steep proportions. Windows are mullioned and transomed casements in flush frames, with moulded cornices over (no transoms on 2nd floor). 2 doors, planked, with contemporary iron hinges, both with mullioned oblong fanlights, 1 arched.

PROPOSAL

External repointing works to rear courtyard elevations only.

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.

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 objections,

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.

- Heritage Statement
- Design & Access Statement

Combined, the two documents provide a good understanding of the significance of the designated heritage asset, and explanation of the proposals to repoint as required maintenance of the listed building. This is considered to be in line with the requirements of the NPPF.

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 design by a notable Victorian architect G E Street, and for its pioneering method of construction as an early concrete building built using shuttering. The style of the building is typical of the Victorian era and is a purpose-built boarding house for Marlborough College.

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 212-221 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and relevant local heritage policies and guidance.

The proposal is for the repointing of a large part of the listed building, as part of a regular maintenance programme undertaken by the College, however the focus of the works is on the 1960s dormitory wing, rather than the main historic building (which is generally cement rendered, as per original design and construction). The 1960s part of the building, although covered by the listing, is not the focus of the listing, yet the size and area the proposed works cover could have a negative visual impact on the building as a whole if not undertaken with due care and attention.

College Estates Team surveyors have identified large areas of defective pointing, as follows:

- Localised erosion and loss of mortar.
- Open and cracked joints.
- Previous repairs undertaken using inappropriate cement-rich mortars.
- Weathering and failure of external finishes, particularly in exposed elevations.

These defects are leading to moisture penetration, which can accelerate the decay of the existing fabric, and therefore the works are proposed to preserve the structural integrity and long-term performance of the building.

The Heritage Statement acknowledges that a sample panel of pointing will be required for inspection, to be agreed post decision, and therefore this will be conditioned.

A method statement for the works has been provided – it proposes the use of power tools for mortar removal, which would not usually be acceptable on a listed building, however, the works are concentrated on the 1960s extension, and not the main historic building, and the careful use of power tools for this part of the building is considered acceptable in this instance only, as there is low to no risk on the designated heritage asset's significance or significant historic fabric.

The works are considered to be required maintenance of the listed building, and they are proposed on the part of the building lower in significance than the historic house. Undertaken carefully, the works will address the damp problems identified and limit visual impact on the

building as a whole, although it is acknowledged that new pointing will always be more prominent than older pointing that has aged and coloured due to time and environmental factors.

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/A
(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 repointing works are focused on the 1960's part of the building and are required maintenance works to address defective pointing and damp concerns. The building is used as boarding accommodation, the function it was originally designed and built for, although the Victorian building is reason for designation and the 1960's part is less significant despite forming part of the listed building. The works can have a visual impact on appearance, however they are required works to support the ongoing maintenance of the building and to address damp issues to preserve the building and its fabric. The impact of the proposals on the designated heritage asset should be relatively neutral in terms of significance, and beneficial for maintenance, and therefore the requirements of current conservation legislation, policy or guidance are considered to be met.

RECOMMENDATION:

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

- Standard time limit
- Approved plans
- Pointing sample using the method statement submitted and approved