

APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

OFFICER DELGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/01156
APPLICATION TYPE:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
SITE ADDRESS:	Church Street House, 13 Church Street, Steeple Ashton, Trowbridge, BA14 6EW
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Removal of remaining render from high level on south west elevation. Clean down of dressed stone and repoint with lime/sand mortar
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The application site comprises a two-storey masonry-built house known as Church Street House which is a Grade II listed building, located within the settlement of Steeple Ashton. The building is designated for its special architectural and/or historic interest under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The site lies within Steeple Ashton Conservation Area, and within proximity of a few listed buildings, including the adjoining dwellings.

The building exhibits a painted masonry front elevation, with the roof screened by a parapet detail. The front façade is formed of three bays, with a central doorway, with an arched blind window above. To the ground and first floors are eight-over-eight timber sash window. The side elevation is visible within the street scene, and presents a gable end, with painted finish to the ground floor and the upper section has had some paint removed exposing an ashlar finish. The property retains features of special interest that contribute to its heritage significance.

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

House at end of row. Probably C17, refronted 1815. Stucco on brick, rear wall rendered timber-frame, Welsh slate roof with coped verges, brick stacks to right gable end and to left of centre. L- plan. Two-storey, 3-window. Central door with 6 fielded panels in pilastered architrave with flat stone hood on brackets, 16-pane sash either side. Lintel plat band, first floor has 16-pane sash either side of blind round-arched window over door, with painted date 1815, moulded cornice to plain blocking course. Right return has fixed small-pane window to ground floor, 2-light casement to first. Two-storey C18 rear wing with beaded mullioned casements, rear of main range with C20 lean-to extension, single-storey gabled wing to left. Interior has blocked open fireplace, chamfered beams, early C19 joinery.

PROPOSAL

The proposal description states that the works are for the ‘Removal of remaining render from high level on south west elevation. Clean down of dressed stone and repoint with lime/sand mortar’. Reading the submitted information, the proposed scheme is to remove isolated patches of failed render (stucco) and rake out the joints and repoint using a lime-based mortar (specification provided) to the south-west (side elevation).

During the site inspection, the side elevation has had a paint finish, which has failed/ been removed at first floor level, exposing the keyed dressed ashlar stone. The proposed works looks to remove the remaining paint finish and retain the exposed stone finish. Where the mortar joints have failed to the areas of stone work, these will be repaired using a lime-based mortar mix.

The careful removal of the paint is supported as this is likely to be causing longer term harm to the historic fabric as modern paint finishes can trap moisture within the historic fabric. The retention of the fine ashlar stonework is acceptable as it is presumed that this would have been the intended finish for the property.

The proposed lime mortar mix (3 parts stone dust: 1 part Holm sand: 1 part 3.5NHL lime) is considered to be acceptable to undertake the repair works. Within the submitted information a sample patch has been undertaken, and whilst this shows a lighter mortar than existing, but this will tone with age and exposure and is considered acceptable.

The proposed works do not specify any works to the front elevation; therefore, it is presumed that this elevation will remain painted.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Not applicable

Proposal / Summary

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 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

Steeple Ashton Parish Council raised no objection.
No other comments were received.

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.

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.

The submitted application provided a Design & Access Statement, which included a Heritage Assessment, with photographs of the existing elevation and the test patch of the mortar mix. This is considered to be acceptable for the proposed works to the listed building.

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 the architectural design and form of a vernacular village timber framed dwelling that has been updated in 1815 with new elevations, which includes the side (south-west) elevation. The core of the building is believed to date from the C17 with later rear wing (C18) and C20 lean-to extension.

The proposed works are focused on the side (south-west) elevation, which is dated to the 1815 when the property was modernised and updated to offer a more polite, Georgian inspired property.

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 proposed works look to remove the modern paint finish and expose the ashlar stone and stone elements, as it was originally intended to be seen, as the work is of fair quality finish. The use of modern plasticised paints is not supported on traditionally constructed buildings as they often prevent vapour permeability (breathability) which can then cause damp or defects within the property.

The removal of the paint finish will not cause harm to the character of the conservation area as there is a mix of materials and architectural styles within the vicinity, including painted render/brick and exposed brick and stone.

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?	Y
(b)	If yes, has a protected species survey been submitted?	N
(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: Due to the location of the house, and the proposed works are near to the roof structure, and infilling of minor cracks (missing pointing), these areas could be potential locations for bats. Care and consideration of the works should be undertaken. Consideration of confirming with local bat group or Ecologist to confirm bats will not be present.

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 proposals on heritage assets will be largely positive and 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:

- WA5 Time Frame