

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/02663 (FUL) PL/2026/03233 (LBC)
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full planning permission Listed Building Consent
SITE ADDRESS:	Town Hall, High Street, Chippenham, SN15 3ER
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Removal of existing gas heating/cooling system to be replaced with new electrified heating/cooling system. External works to include new air handling unit, condenser units, air source heat pump and pipework. Internal works to include new fan coil units, radiators, ceiling swirl diffusers, roof void boarding out, lighting and pipework
RECOMMENDATION:	That Planning Permission be GRANTED That Listed Building Consent be GRANTED

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks planning permission and listed building consent for the removal of an existing heating system to be replaced with a new electrified heating/cooling system. External works to include new air handling unit, condenser units, air source heat pump and pipework. Internal works to include new fan coil units, radiators, ceiling swirl diffusers, roof void boarding out, lighting and pipework.

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The town hall is a Grade II listed building, the listing is given below;

The listing entry for the Town Hall and Neeld Hall is:

ST9273SW HIGH STREET 930-1/10/55 (South side) 25/04/50 New Town Hall and Neeld Hall

GV II

Town hall. 1848 by J Thompson at the expense of Joseph Neeld, MP. Limestone ashlar front, rubblestone right return, slate roof with stacks to rear. PLAN: double-depth plan with market hall to the rear. EXTERIOR: 2 storeys; 4-bay front.

The 3 bays to the left are symmetrical, the bay to the right is stepped forward and is 3 storeys, (described later). Simple cornice and blocking course with plain bands below, and at 1st-floor sill level. Semicircular arches to each light of 3-light small-paned sash windows with off-set sills over wide semicircular arches to a loggia. Plain pilasters on plinths flank the facade; those to the central bay, which is stepped forward, rise above to blocking course to support a parapet and elaborate carved Neeld Arms. Below the cornice a panel states, "The Corporation of Chippenham erected the Arms of Joseph Neeld Esq, the founder of this Hall and Market Place in acknowledgement of his private munificence 1851". The bay to the right, probably earlier, has a balustraded parapet and moulded cornice; a 2-light sash window in a raised mullioned

surround to the 2nd floor; platband; a full height tripartite window under a cornice on consoles; sill band over a tripartite plate-glass sash window with a cornice and a blocked doorway to the right with a shallow hood on brackets. The right return has various C19 sash windows in C19 surrounds and door in plain ashlar surrounds. INTERIOR: the loggia has a stone vaulted ceiling. A fine facade, the plain, heavy pilasters contributing to a rather severe Classical style. Thompson was employed by Neeld on other projects, including Grittleton House, Grittleton CP.

The site is wholly within the Chippenham Conservation Area, in an area typified by retail/business uses.

RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Wiltshire Core Strategy:

- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
- Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment

Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan

Wiltshire Design Guide: Appendix D – Design Guidance for Householder extensions

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Chippenham Town Council: No comment received

Wiltshire Council Conservation: No comment received

Wiltshire Council Public Protection: Comment received

Requested additional noise surveys/information

REPRESENTATIONS

No comments were received.

ASSESSMENT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

In accordance with this statutory requirement, this application has been assessed against the relevant policies of the Development Plan, including the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and, where applicable, and the made Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan.

Design and Impact upon the upon the character and context of the area

Core Policy 57 - Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that all new development is of high design quality, reflecting local context, character, and distinctiveness.

The proposal will see the alteration of the external ancillary elements for the heating and cooling system. In terms of scale and design the proposal remains as a subordinate addition and does not suggest that the building is being overdeveloped. The design is typical of this form of ancillary development and as such the proposal is acceptable in terms of design.

Having regard to the above, the proposal complies with the design principles set out in Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide and the made Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan.

Amenity

Point vii of Core Policy 57 - Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that developments do not adversely affect neighbouring properties.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Paragraph 135(f), stresses that planning decisions should ensure developments provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

The proposed development has been assessed in terms of its potential impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, with particular regard to loss of light, overshadowing, loss of privacy, and overbearing effects.

Due to the proposal's location, it is not considered that the proposal would result in an unacceptable impact on neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking, loss or light or overbearing impact.

The comment from WC Public Protection is noted. It is also noted that no noise survey has been submitted. The nearest flats are located approximately 16m distant from the units. There is a single storey octagonal staircase turret and Town Hall staircase windows (1.5m height) located halfway along the Town Hall flat roof between the site of the proposed AHU/condenser units and any residential, which further reduces any potential noise impacts.

There is already condenser units located on the flat roof in the proposed location (which would be removed). It is understood that no objection/complaints have been received.

The air source heat pump would be located within a fully enclosed external courtyard in the Neeld, away from any residential premises so there should be no unacceptable noise implications from this element.

It is considered that the proposals are located in a town centre location and the background noise levels can be reasonably considered to be higher than residential locations between of the level of activity, the commercial nature of land-uses and the increased density of the built form. It is not a tranquil location.

The proposal in this instance is considered on balance to be acceptable and would not result in unacceptable amenity impacts in terms of noise. It is also considered the use of a condition requiring a noise survey prior to commencement would not meet the reasonableness requirement test for a planning condition. As the proposal is broadly comparable to the current elements. In a worst case scenario if a statutory nuisance were to occur, for example because the equipment is not being suitably maintained or installed then Wiltshire Council can use other legislative controls to address the situation. Suffice to conclude at this stage that in land-use terms the proposals appear reasonable and given the location of the noise generating equipment relative to residential properties, in what has to be acknowledged as a town centre location, then there is no planning policy or evidence to justify the requests of public protection officers. To address the request would have cost and time implications on the applicant. The circumstances are material here noting that the applicant is a public body and moreover operating a listed building without an operational, cost effective and permanent heating and cooling solution for their public premises.

On balance and considering the current arrangement and the proposal it is considered that the proposal therefore accords with Core Policy 57 point vii in respect of safeguarding residential amenity and Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide.

Heritage Impact

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 66 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 Act requires the Council to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of designated Conservation Areas.

The Council's Core Strategy Policy CP58 'Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment' requires that designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner appropriate to their significance and encourages proposals which improve the condition of heritage assets at risk.

The Council's Core Strategy CP 57: Ensuring high quality design requires a high quality of design in all new developments. The policy requires applicants to "demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire through (amongst other things) responding to the value of the natural and historic environment and being sympathetic to and conserving historic buildings and landscapes. Development is required to respond positively to the existing in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate the building into its setting.

The NPPF outlines government policy for planning. Chapter 16 of the NPPF 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the Government's high-level policies concerning heritage and sustainable development.

The proposal will see the introduction of new elements in terms of the heating and cooling system. The proposal will see some minor loss of historic materials arising from the installation of new pipework and plant equipment on the roof. As some limited harm has been identified, albeit on the lower end of less than substantial it is considered that the installation of more efficient heating and cooling system will ensure that there is sufficient wider public benefit to offset this limited harm.

New pipework would follow the line of existing pipework and use existing openings within the building fabric. New pipework would not be visible within the main Neeld Hall. Existing modern radiators would be replaced with marginally taller radiators in similar locations and with the same white colour finish as existing. These works are considered not to result in any harm to the significance or historical fabric of the Neeld Hall.

When considering the impact upon on the historic Cheese Hall, the proposed works in the Cheese Hall would be confined to the replacement of existing boilers and water heaters with new pumps and pressurisation unit in the second-floor boiler room. As such the impact on the significance of the listed building would be neutral and would not result in harm to the fabric or setting of the heritage asset.

the proposals are considered to preserve the special interest of the listed building, its appearance and setting, with any harm to its significance being 'less than substantial' and outweighed by the public benefits of securing a more energy efficient building, increasing comfort for building users, and securing the continued long term viability of the building, and that of Chippenham Conservation Area, in accordance with the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, development plan policies CP57 and CP58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, TC4 of the Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan and advice from Historic England.

The proposal, by virtue of its scale, design, and use of materials, is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and setting of the listed building. While some limited harm to the heritage asset albeit less than substantial, there is sufficient clear public benefit to offset this harm. As such it would not result in harm to the significance of any heritage assets, and no objections have been raised by the Conservation Officer.

The development is therefore considered to comply with Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Householder planning applications are exempt from the requirement to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain under Schedule 7A, Section 4(2)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as inserted by the Environment Act 2021.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of its design, scale, and relationship with the surrounding area. It would not result in any unacceptable harm to the character of the locality, the amenities of neighbouring occupiers, or the heritage, or ecology.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the relevant policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the Wiltshire Local Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework. As such, the application is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions set out below.

RECOMMENDATION: That Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions.

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

1663GE S01B Cheese Hall - Second Floor Plan
1663GE S02D Town Hall - Ceiling Plan
1663GE S03B Town Hall - Roof Plan
1663GE S30B Superstructure Details
4887 SK03 Town Hall proposed services diagrams r2 08 Apr 25
4887 SK10 Neeld Courtyard ASHP Elevations P04
4887 SK11 Town Hall AHU Visuals r2 01 Apr 26
4887 SK13 Neeld Radiator Visuals 27 Nov 25 amended
CTH-E3CE-NH-00-D-M-9010 Neeld Hall Ground Floor Mechanical Proposed Drawing_T03
CTH-E3CE-NH-01-D-M-9010 Neeld Hall First Floor Mechanical Proposed Drawing_T01
CTH-E3CE-NH-02-D-M-9010 Neeld Hall Second Floor Mechanical Proposed Drawing_T02
CTH-E3CE-TH-01-D-E-9010 Town Hall First Floor Electrical Proposed Drawing_T02

CTH-E3CE-TH-01-D-M-9010 Town Hall First Floor Mechanical Proposed Drawing_T02

CTH-E3CE-TH-R0-D-E-9010 Town Hall Roof Electrical Proposed Drawing_T02

CTH-E3CE-TH-R0-D-M-9010 Town Hall Roof Mechanical Proposed Drawing_T03

Town Hall-Neeld

Weighted System for Lead Roofs 1

Weighted System for Lead Roofs 1

(Received by LPA 26th May 2026)

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match in material, colour and texture those detailed on the approved drawings and application form.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

RECOMMENDATION: That Listed Building Consent be GRANTED subject to conditions.

The works for which Listed Building Consent is hereby granted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

1663GE S01B Cheese Hall - Second Floor Plan

1663GE S02D Town Hall - Ceiling Plan

1663GE S03B Town Hall - Roof Plan

1663GE S30B Superstructure Details

4887 SK03 Town Hall proposed services diagrams r2 08 Apr 25

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CTH-E3CE-NH-00-D-M-9010 Neeld Hall Ground Floor Mechanical Proposed Drawing_T03

CTH-E3CE-NH-01-D-M-9010 Neeld Hall First Floor Mechanical Proposed Drawing_T01

CTH-E3CE-NH-02-D-M-9010 Neeld Hall Second Floor Mechanical Proposed Drawing_T02

CTH-E3CE-TH-01-D-E-9010 Town Hall First Floor Electrical Proposed Drawing_T02

CTH-E3CE-TH-01-D-M-9010 Town Hall First Floor Mechanical Proposed Drawing_T02

CTH-E3CE-TH-R0-D-E-9010 Town Hall Roof Electrical Proposed Drawing_T02

CTH-E3CE-TH-R0-D-M-9010 Town Hall Roof Mechanical Proposed Drawing_T03

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