

APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

OFFICER DELGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/03008
APPLICATION TYPE:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
SITE ADDRESS:	10 Prospect Square, Westbury, BA13 3ET
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Replacement of the current 1980's slimline gas fireplace, mantelpiece, and hearth with a modern, cast iron freestanding gas fire and oak mantle beam. While doing so, reopening the lower third of the fireplace to its original state allowing the free standing fireplace to sit within to achieve a traditional log fire appearance.
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The application site comprises a two-storey brick-built, mid-terrace dwelling known as 10 Prospect Square, which is a Grade II listed building, located within the settlement of Westbury. 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 Westbury Conservation Area and is within the setting of several listed buildings, which form Prospect Square.

The building exhibits a red-brick exterior, with an irregular gable front, which No.10 shares with No.11. Prospect Square is a group of smaller terraces formed of brick or stone, and the group retains features of special interest that contribute to its heritage significance.

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

WESTBURY BRATTON ROAD 1. 5411 (South Side) Nos 7 to 11 (consec) Prospect Square Nos 29 to 33 (consec) Prospect Square ST 8751 SW 4/114 17.12.76. ST 8751 6/114

II GV

2. 2 storeys, red brick with brick cill and over lintel bands, latter stepped in several steps per house. Irregular gabled front. One gable to No 8, a low gable over 1st floor window to No 9, a single gable over Nos 10 and 11. All gables tile hung with colour and fish scale banding. Gable lights to Nos 8, 10/11 and in return gable of roof. Tile roof with 3 course fish scale tile bands and vertical polychromy between in front, diaper polychromy to sides. 1 range of windows per house, 2 light casements with slightly cambered arches. Ground floor windows slightly off set by bracketted lean-to tiled porches. 4 panel doors. 2 brick chimney stacks, cruciform on irregular octagonal base. Nos 29-55 (consec): Same design, reflected. The gables are tile hung with fish scale tiles in polychrome bands.

PROPOSAL

The proposed works look to remove a modern fire surround, inset and hearth, to allow for the making good of the opening to insert a gas operated 'log burner' and form a new hearth and over mantle. The over mantel, formed of oak, will be mechanically fixed to the chimney breast.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

NA

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.

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

Westbury Town Council raised no objection.
No other responses were received.

REPRESENTATIONS

In accordance with the requirements of Section 5(3)(a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 (as amended) publicity is not required for listed building consent to carry out works affecting only the interior of a Grade II (unstarred) listed building.

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 application provided photographs of the existing fireplace, and a “Heritage Statement” which provided a summary of significance and an impact assessment of the proposed works. Additional information was requested via email (17 July 2026) to confirm how the proposed new mantel would be installed, and it was advised that it would be by mechanical fixing (screws) into the existing chimney breast.

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 group value of the development, which was constructed in 1869 by Abraham Laverton, who leased Angel Mill. The group included Alms-houses, terraces and semi-detached houses for the Mill Foremen and managers. As highlighted in the submitted Heritage Statement, part of their significance responds to the reason of their construction, as Propsect Square was built for the fired workers who voted for Abraham Laverton. This action resulted in the supporting the Secret Ballot Act 1872.

The architectural design is developed from a standard design pattern book, with architectural details formed by contrasting materials, such as brick surrounds to windows where the main property is stone built, vertical hanging tiles and brick banding to brick-built dwellings. The planned layout means that the front elevations overlook a communal green square. The uniformity and cohesive appearance of the group and their setting are retained though the main entrance doors, windows and front garden treatment of cobbles and brick.

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 existing gas appliance, surround and hearth are a modern insertion and are of very limited significance. The chimney breast appears to be original and at the time of construction, would have been an open fire within the living room, and possibly a stove/ range in the current dining room. Over time, these have been altered. Gas fires allowed for instant heat, controllability and compared to real fires were considered to be clean.

The proposed scheme looks to carefully remove the modern fittings and replace with a more contemporary appearance of an oak mantel over the opening, with a recessed gas-fired 'Log Burner' on a new hearth stone.

No details of how the existing wall or the interior of the fire opening will be made good, however, due to the existing level of intervention, these can be undertaken as a condition. There is a low potential of the original grate or details remaining, and should this occur, the council should be notified prior to any further works proceeding (to be conditioned).

The installation of the current gas fired fire, surround and hearth is relatively modern, and responds to the piecemeal updating of the interior to the listed building. These elements are of low significance, and therefore the loss is considered acceptable. The proposed replacement looks to open up the fireplace, and insert a gas fired log burner and oak over mantel, which provides a more contemporary design. The proposed style is simple and honest, suitable for a house of this nature.

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?	NA
(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?	

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.

The overall impact of the proposals on heritage assets will be neutral as it will be replacing a modern insertion with a replacement fire and surround. 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
- Drawings/ etc.

- **WL21 MAKING GOOD**

Within 3 month(s) of the removal of the existing fire surround and fire being carried out, all adjoining surfaces which have been disturbed by the works (including brickwork, plaster and floor tiles) shall be made good with materials and finishes to match those of existing undisturbed areas surrounding the new opening.

REASON: In the interests of preserving the character and appearance of the listed building and its setting.

- **WL23 SAFEGUARD EXISTING BUILDING(S)**

The works hereby granted consent shall be carried out in such a manner as to ensure that the existing building(s) is/are preserved and not structurally or superficially altered in any way whatsoever, save in accordance with the approved plans and the said building(s) shall be structurally supported and weatherproofed at all times during the construction period in accordance with established building practice.

REASON: To preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

- Following the removal of the existing modern gas fire, surround, back plate and hearth, if any original fabric is found, works must stop and the Local Planning Authority Conservation Officer is notified.

REASON: To preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

- To ensure protection of existing chimney stack, the register plate is to be inserted to allow for ventilation of the stack and access to sweep chimney.

REASON: To preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.