

APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

OFFICER DELGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/03386
APPLICATION TYPE:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
SITE ADDRESS:	Fox Talbot Museum, High Street, Lacock, Chippenham, SN15 2LG
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Introduce lateral restraint and re-render a 20th century stack at the southeast gable elevation of the Fox Talbot Museum, Lacock.
RECOMMENDATION:	

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The Fox Talbot Museum and Abbey Lodge are 16th century originally built for stabling based on evidence of timber uprights for stalling and domestic mullion windows. The building is constructed in rubble stone with stone slate roof and coped gables. The king post roof structure is also original.

The south side is orientated onto the road. The rear north elevation onto the more private Botanic Gardens and includes two cart doors in rubble stone with stone tile lean to' and timber steps to a first floor loft door.

The exterior was decorated in the mid in the mid-18th century with stucco tracery and buttresses to south elevation to give the impression of a chapel. It is understood threshing barn doors were removed in the late 19th century and the east end converted to a dwelling in the early 20th century. This application relates to a rendered brick gable stack to the former dwelling.

It was eventually converted to a museum of photography in 1975 and forms the public entrance to the Abbey for the National Trust. The Museum Building is located on a prominent position at the south end of the High Street adjoining the Abbey entrance in the Lacock Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area takes in both the village and the Abbey and the surrounding open countryside to assist in preserve the wider setting.

PROPOSAL

Repairs to introduce lateral restraint and re-render a 20th century stack at the southeast gable elevation of the Fox Talbot Museum, Lacock.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
N/99/00967/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Unknown Date: 20/7/1999 – REINSTATEMENT OF EXISTING PATHS AND PROVISION OF GARDEN FENCING
N/99/00745/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Application does not need permission Date: 16/4/1999 – EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO BOTANIC GARDENS - ERECTION OF FENCE

N/99/03012/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Unknown Date: 1/6/2000 – ROAD IMPROVEMENTS AND ALTERATIONS
N/93/01348/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Approved Date: 12/11/1993 – REMOVE OVERHEAD HEATING DUCTS AND BOILER/ALTERATION OF EXISTING BOILER ROOM/RE- ARRANGE ENTRANCE DOORS/REMOVE FIRST FLOOR STORE ROOM ALTERATION TO BOILER ROOM
N/94/01912/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Approved Date: 22/3/1995 – ALTERATIONS TO LODGE TO PROVIDE VISITOR FACILITIES AND LIVING ACCOMMODATION/ USE OUTBUILDING AS STAFF FACILITIES ALTERATIONS TO LODGE
N/94/01916/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approved Date: 22/3/1995 – PART CHANGE OF USE OF LODGE TO MUSEUM AND ALTERATIONS TO PROVIDE VISITORS FACILITIES AND ACCESS PART USE AS MUSEUM/ALTERATIONS
N/93/01719/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Approved Date: 9/12/1993 – NEW BOILER HOUSE TO REAR BOILER HOUSE
N/93/01718/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approved Date: 9/12/1993 – ERECT NEW BOILER HOUSE TO REAR ADJACENT TO EXISTING BUILDINGS IN WALLED GARDEN BOILER HOUSE
N/92/02230/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Approved Date: 22/2/1993 – INTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL ROOMS/FIRE ALARM AND SECURITY SYSTEM INTERNALS/FIRE/SECURITY SYSTEMS
N/04/02027/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 1/9/2004 – ERECTION OF ADDITIONAL RAINWATER GOODS
14/10770/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 9/1/2015 – Replacement of Existing Stair Chair Lift with Passenger Lift
N/05/01981/TCA - Work to Trees in a Cons Area Decision - Approved Date: 20/9/2005 – Tree Surgery and Felling Work to Various Sites
ENQ/2024/00442 - Pre-Application enquiry Decision - Pre-App Response Date: 23/4/2024 – To improve the access and egress from the Fox Talbot museum, we propose changing the exit to the Botanic garden at the rear of the museum by utilising existing barn doors and installing a new path. Then installing new automatic glass doors to front entrance
PL/2024/09463 - Listed building consent (Alt/Ext) Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 11/12/2024 – Re-hang timber doors to open outwards and add inner sliding glazed doors for additional access
PL/2025/03303 - Approval of details reserved by a condition Decision - Approve Date: 23/5/2025 – Discharge of condition 3 - Large scale details of planning application PL/2024/09463 (Re-hang timber doors to open outwards and add inner sliding glazed doors for additional access)
PL/2025/05930 - Listed building consent (Alt/Ext) Decision - Approve Date: 25/9/2025 – Fit new gutters and downpipes to rear elevation
ENQ/2024/00819 - PD Enquiries Decision - PP Required Date: 26/6/2024 – Summer of play hub with marquee tipi and 2 bell tents
N/03/02855/TCA - Work to Trees in a Cons Area Decision - Approved Date: 9/12/2003 – TREE FELLING AND SURGERY WORK

N/03/03051/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 30/1/2004 – RETAINING WALLS AND GRILLES TO ALLOW PERMANENT DISPLAY OF MONASTIC DRAIN
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N/08/02373/TCA - Work to Trees in a Cons Area Decision - Approved Date: 28/11/2008 – Fell 2 Robinia, 1 Siberian Crab Apple, 1 Cedar, 1 Holly and 2 Planes

PL/2026/03386 - Listed building consent (Alt/Ext) – The proposed works are to introduce lateral restraint and re-render a 20th century stack at the southeast gable elevation of the Fox Talbot Museum, Lacock.

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

Lacock Parish Council responded on the 15th July 2026 – 'As this appears to be conservation and repair work rather than an alteration to the building's character, Lacock Parish Council has 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.

No representations were 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 application includes existing and proposed chimney stack east elevation, a Heritage Impact Assessment and Design and Access Statement.

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.”

The Museum significance comes from its age and rarity and architectural and historic interest dating from the 16th century its position and use as part of the agricultural function of the Abbey and preservation of historic fabric displaying carpentry and construction techniques including stone walling and king post roof structure.

The Museum building prominent location to High Street and forming the main public entrance to the Abbey and grounds for the National Trust gives a significant contribution to the Lacock Conservation Area’s character and appearance.

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.

Following reports of loose and falling sections of render from the south east end gable chimney, the National Trust scaffolded the chimney stack to investigate. The chimney emerges from a lean to extension to the gable which has a tile stone roof and uncoursed limestone rubble walls and runs up to a crown with three chimney pots, shared by both stacks.

It was found that the render to the chimney stack was generally in poor condition, almost entirely hollow and unbonded, and comprised a patchwork of cement renders over a soft red brick.

Following the removal of the render down to a steel band and pattress where the render remains below, it was discovered that the stack was made up of two adjacent stacks, with no structural ties to each other or to the stone gable of the building.

The stack appears to lean into the gable wall, which itself is not plumb, until about 2m below the ridge, at which point the stacks straightens up and becomes plumb, avoiding the projecting coping stones on the gable. This creates a 50 mm gap between the original gable stone wall and the brick stack.

There is no evidence of any structural tying in of the chimney at this point. The top of the chimney has a limestone crown that spans both stacks and all three flues.

Due to the public location where visitors to the Abbey ground exit the building via the single-story extension, it was viewed as a public safety issue.

The proposal is to stabilise and re-render the masonry chimney. This will be achieved by inserting seven structural ties bands into brick courses roughly evenly spaced up the stacks. The mortar joint to the bricks will be chased out and receive single Helibar 60 stainless steel bar inserted into mortar joint

Top two Helibar bands will be returned completely around the chimney stack to provide a continuous ring beam.

The lower five bands are to be drilled back into gable wall and drilled 400mm back into the stonework, using a resin fixing and returned around the chimney on the north side.

All Helibar installations will be completed in accordance with structural engineers' recommendations and manufacturer's method statement.

In situ repairs to brickwork including replacement of individual damaged or missing bricks using lime mortar will also be undertaken and the stacks will then be rendered with a three coat lime render. The mix to be an NHL2 lime, with an appropriate well graded sand, colour matched to mortar joints in the gable elevation, in a ratio of 1 part lime to 3 parts sand.

The stacks will be consolidated and restrained, structurally tied into the gable wall using steel ties that once rendered will not be visible. The rendering will protect the masonry and will reinstate the aesthetically appearance prior to the works.

In this case, the impact of the proposals on heritage assets will be largely positive and the proposals will also result in heritage benefit by virtue of the proposed investment in structural repairs and improved render finish which will help to secure the stability of the building and insure public safety to those using the Abbey entrance.

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 proposals will also result in heritage benefit by virtue of the proposed investment in structural repairs and improved render finish to the chimney stack which will help to secure the stability of the building and insure public safety to those using the Abbey entrance.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Listed Building Consent be GRANTED, subject to the standard 3 year and plan list conditions.