

Havant Borough Council
Heritage Consultation Response

Date – 8/11/24

Officer – Rachael McMurray, Principal Heritage Officer

Application – APP/24/00783

Site Address – Sir George Staunton Country Park, Middle Park Way, Havant, PO9 5HB

Proposal – Hampshire County Council consultation for listed building consent relating to structural repairs at the Gothic Library.

Site / Location

The application site comprises a building known as the Gothic Library at Sir George Staunton Country Park. The building is Grade II listed and lies within the Grade II* Leigh Park (Registered Park and Garden) and the Sire George Staunton Conservation Area.

Legislation

When assessing the proposal, the following legislation and policy context is taken in consideration.

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ("1990 Act") requires local planning authorities to have **special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest** when considering whether to grant listed building consent.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which **affects a listed building or its setting**, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires planning authorities, when considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a **Conservation Area**, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that area.

National Planning Policy Framework (revised November 2023)

Chapter 16 of the NPPF relates to **the Historic Environment** including paragraphs 195 – 214. The building subject to this application is not listed but is deemed to be a non-designated heritage asset (as set out in the introduction) and therefore the following paragraphs are most relevant to the determination of this application:

Para 207 states that:

*‘where a development will result in **substantial harm to, or total loss of**, the significance of a designated heritage asset, permission should be refused, unless this harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits, or a number of criteria are met. Where less than substantial harm is identified paragraph 208 requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development*

Para 208 states that:

*‘Where a development proposal will lead to **less than substantial harm** to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use’.*

Para 209 states that:

‘The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset’.

Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy 2011 and Allocations Plan 2014)

Policy CS11 – Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of the Havant Borough

Policy CS11 (4) states that planning permission will be granted for development which:

‘Protects and where appropriate enhances the borough’s statutory and non-statutory heritage designations by appropriately managing development in or adjacent to conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, archaeological sites, buildings of local historic or architectural interest’.

Policy CS16 – High Quality Design

Policy CP16 (1a) of the Core Strategy states that:

‘Planning permission will be granted for development that is designed to a high standard, which helps to create places where people want to live, work and relax. All development should demonstrate that its design:

- a) Identifies and responds positively to existing features of natural, historic or local character within or close to the proposed development site’.*
- b) Integrates with existing local landscape features, promotes wildlife and biodiversity and/or applies characteristics of the local area into the design of a scheme wherever possible to create variety and interest;*
- c) Uses the characteristics of the locality to help inform the design of the new development including heights, massing, existing buildings lines, plot widths and depths, materials and proportions of windows and doors;*
- d) Is well connected to and integrates with the immediate local area and the wider area by linking to existing pedestrian and cycle routes and encouraging people to use public transport where possible; and*

- e) *The development does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbours through smell, the loss of privacy, outlook, noise and overlooking.*

Policy DM20 (Allocations Plan) - Historic Assets

Policy DM20 states that;

'Planning permission will be granted for development proposals that conserves and enhances the historic assets of Havant. It also states that application which affect, or have the potential to affect, heritage assets are expected to provide a Heritage Statement that:

1. Describe the significance of the asset and its setting, using appropriate expertise and where necessary original survey, at a level of detail proportionate to its significance and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal.

2. Sets out the impact of the development on the heritage assets and mitigation that is proportionate to the impact and the significance of the heritage asset, including where possible positive opportunities to conserve and enjoy heritage assets.

Assessment

Following an inspection by HCC, certain defects were recorded with the internal structure of the Gothic Library. The proposed repairs are as follows:

- Roof structure:- Designed timber propping to the high-level octagonal plate.
- Masonry:- Structural repairs to add 2 rows of Helibar stitching to a significant crack to Face 2 parapet wall.
- Chimney:- To inspect the chimney capping, and adapt to prevent water ingress and promote water run-off
- Fabric:- To acknowledge the Like for like localised conservation and repairs of loose render to reduce the risk of falling masonry, and to reduce water ingress which may lead to further decay to the fabric.
- To secure loose glass windows using lime mortar putty.
- Light touch cleaning to remove moss and algae for the façade render and window glazing.

A detailed heritage statement has been submitted with the application which sets out the significance of the heritage assets. With regards to the impact of the works on the significance of the historic library, the hertiage statement advises:

'The roof plate propping is high level and partially concealed by the beam. It has very little impact on the existing structure, and potentially would be reversible. The location of the Helibar stitching has been carefully considered. On the external façade there will be 1 row, set into the brick course above the window arch. The other location is on the roof side of the parapet wall, and will not be seen. In both locations the facework will be repointed in lime mortar to match the existing. This project is not a refurbishment. Minor works to the façade, only seeks to retain and preserve the existing fabric. Therefore, the impact of the interventions on the historic fabric is considered to be Low'.

The view that some level of harm (low) would occur, regarding the repairs to the roof, is concurred with however, this would be less than substantial at the very lower end of the scale. The very low level

of harm would be outweighed by the public benefit of securing the structural integrity of the building and protecting its future longevity as a national heritage asset. The other proposed works relate to like for like repairs and are not considered to result in harm to the Gothic library, nor the conservation area, nor registered park and garden.

The proposals therefore meet the tests set out in Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the relevant sections / policies of the NPPF and adopted Local Plan.

Conclusion

NO OBJECTION