

## COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES  
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 7 December 2022

**Ward:** Abbey

**App No.:** 221520/LBC

**Address:** Various locations, central Reading

**Proposal:** Listed Building Consent for works including repairs and cleaning to Zinzan Chest Tomb, Jubilee Cross, Simeon Monument and Victoria Statue

**Applicant:** Reading Borough Council

**Deadline:** 29/12/2022

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Subject to no substantive objections being received at the expiry of the consultation period of the application being advertised in the Local Press by 8 December, delegate to the Assistant Director of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services to **GRANT Listed Building Consent.**

#### **Conditions to include:**

1. Standard Listed Building time limit - 3 years
2. Materials to be as approved
3. Listed Building approved plans. No departure is to be made from the above approved plans and heritage statements outlining specific schedules of works, drawings and the use of traditional materials and methods unless otherwise agreed by the local planning authority.

#### **Informatives to include:**

- S.59 Highways Act
- TPO tree advice - no tree works are approved by virtue of this Consent.
- Berkshire Archaeology advice re: installation of the new lampposts.
- Possible need for Highways Licence
- Positive and Proactive Working - Approval
- Terms and conditions
- The Diocese should be informed of any proposed works within St Mary's Churchyard which is maintained by the Council and the Church.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The application involves works to four structures within the town centre area. The works comprise the cleaning, maintenance and restoration and repair of 4 monuments: 1) the Zinzan Chest Tomb, 2) the Jubilee Cross Fountain, 3) the Simeon Monument and 4) the Queen Victoria Statue. These monuments have fallen into disrepair and require urgent works to restore them to their original condition. Monuments 1 and 2 are located in St Mary's Butts/Castle Street Conservation Area and monuments 3 and 4 are located in Market Place/London Street Conservation Area.
- 1.2 The works form part of the Reading High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) project to form part of a heritage-led regeneration initiative, led by Historic England, working with the Borough Council to enhance Reading's heritage. HSHAZ funding has been made

available for the proposed schedules of works.

- 1.3 Part of this scheme covered in this report involves 'permitted development' works to improve lighting around St Mary's Church (Reading Minster), which falls beyond the scope of planning control and is presented to the Planning Application Committee for information. These works comprise the maintenance of existing lampposts within St Mary's Church grounds and the erection of an additional six 'heritage' lampposts being added to match the existing lampposts.



- 2.2 **Monument 1) The Zinzan Chest Tomb (in the curtilage of Grade I listed St Marys Church).** This is a memorial tomb belonging to the ZinZan family dating from 1781. The proposed works are to undertake stone matching repairs to white limestone, dismantle the tomb and repair with hard mortar and to reinstate the Zinzan chest tomb with stonework repairs and sharpen the lettering of inscriptions. There is evidence that the tomb has been repaired in the past, it is currently in a state of disrepair with split slabs and an inner north and east wall collapse.
- 2.3 **Monument 2) The Jubilee Cross (Grade II Listed)**  
The cross was erected in 1887 to commemorate the completion of the restoration of St. Mary's Church and the diamond jubilee of Queen Victoria.  
The Jubilee Cross in St. Mary's Butts is in a state of disrepair with displaced steps, open joints, missing brick edges and stains. The proposed works are to restore raised lead lettering to match the original medieval style and inscription restoration, restore the brick plinth and reinstate the stonework with lime mortar and undertake stone cleaning.
- 2.4 **Monument 3) The Simeon Monument (Grade II\* Listed)**  
The obelisk-shaped Simeon Monument was commissioned in 1804 by Edward Simeon (c.1755-1812), director of the Bank of England. It sits in Market Place and originally carried lamps to improve the lighting of the Market Place. The proposed works are to clean the monument, restore its limestone surface with decorative finials and details and paint the metal railings.
- 2.5 **Monument 4) The Queen Victoria Statue (Grade II Listed)**  
This is the statue of Queen Victoria by the sculptor, George Simmonds erected to mark the 50<sup>th</sup>. year of Queen Victoria's reign in 1887. The Statue is located in Town Hall Square, north of the Market Place. The proposed works are to clean the statue with a technique sympathetic to the 'Carrara' marble and to supply and fit replacement ornamental galvanised steel chains around the base.
- 2.2 As referred to above, the proposed new lampposts within St Mary's churchyard do not of themselves require planning permission or Listed Building Consent and are to be installed to provide additional light to improve security for pedestrians. These will be in a similar traditional style. Existing lampposts are to be restored/refurbished, which again, needs no formal permission/consent.
- 2.3 Submitted Plans and Documentation:  
Plans, heritage statements and schedules of work and repair were submitted for each structure.

### 3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

05/00150/LBC Address: The Simeon Monument, Market Place, Reading. Proposal: Maintenance and restoration of Simeon Monument and demolition of redundant toilets. Granted 2005

130835 Listed Building Consent for boundary wall repairs to Reading Minster St Mary-the-Virgin. PAC October 2013, 29 October 2013 Department for Communities and Local Government, Secretary of State approval.

130522 REG3 Boundary wall repair to Reading Minster St Mary-the-Virgin. 21 October 2013

131622 Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 and 4 of Planning ref 130522/REG3 and condition 3 of Listed Building Consent ref 130835/LBC

220848 Proposed works to trees at St Mary's churchyard, St Marys Butts, Reading - subject to tree preservation order number 10/06. PAC approval 2 August 2022

## 4. CONSULTATION

### Public consultation

The application was advertised in a local newspaper on 17 November for a 21 day consultation period ending on 8 December 2022.

- 4.1 A site notice was displayed at each site location on 15/11/2022 for a period of 21 days, expiring on 6 December 2022. No responses have been received at the time of writing.

### Internal Consultation

#### *Conservation and Urban Design Officer (CUDO)*

- 4.2 The CUDO has provided a memorandum response on works to various structures in the HSHAZ project, including these four. The proposed works are needed to conserve and maintain these significant heritage assets of Reading. There are no objections subject to the conditions recommended.

#### 4.3 *Historic England*

There is no requirement to consult Historic England (HE) on this type of application, but for their interest, and as HE is involved in the HSHAZ, HE has been consulted. No response has been received at the time of writing this report.

## 5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 5.1 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.
- 5.2 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 5.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).
- 5.4 In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Plan 2019 according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given). Accordingly, the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 and the following Development Plan policies and other guidance are relevant:
- 5.7 Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019)  
EN1 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

Other:

St Mary's Butts/Castle Street Conservation Area Appraisal  
Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal

## 6. APPRAISAL

- 6.1 The main issue to be assessed in this application for Listed Building Consent is the effect of the proposed works on the fabric, character and appearance of the Listed Structures.
- 6.2 Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019) Policy EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment states:

*Historic features and areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings, will be protected and where appropriate enhanced. This will include:*

- *Listed Buildings;*
- *Conservation Areas;*
- *Other features with local or national designation, such as sites and features of archaeological importance, and historic parks and gardens.*

*Planning permission will only be granted where development has no adverse impact on historic assets and their settings. All proposals will be expected to protect and where appropriate enhance the character and appearance of the area in which they are located.*

- 6.3 Both Conservation Area Appraisals refer to the four structures as making a positive contribution to the historic character of the conservation areas. Only high-quality repairs would be appropriate given the prominence of the sites and their roles as historic structures within the conservation areas.
- 6.4 Detailed schedules of works have been provided for repairing each of these structures, including, as necessary, some reconstruction and re-building, localised stonework repair, filling and attending to deteriorated inscriptions and raised lettering and cleaning, using only traditional and sensitive techniques. The schedules have been carefully examined by the Council's CUDO and are considered acceptable. It is considered that the proposals would result in schedules of work for repairs that preserve the historic fabric and ensure that new materials are in keeping with the original structures. The use of carefully-chosen like-for like materials (as far as practicable) to match the originals would ensure that the repairs closely match the constituent materials of the existing structures.
- 6.5. It is possible that the new materials would appear different due to weathering having changed the appearance of the existing structures over time, however it is considered more appropriate to replace with materials of the same type as originally installed, rather than attempting to 'artificially weather' or choosing different materials that more closely resemble the existing in their weathered form as this is likely to have unpredictable long term implications for the appearance. Such techniques would echo, for instance, repairs to the Minster itself, where various recent repair works are clearly identifiable and are considered to 'tell the story' of the heritage asset.
- 6.6. Conditions are recommended for listed Building materials to match the original fabric of the monuments to enable appropriate heritage restoration. At the time of writing, officers are seeking confirmation of all materials to be inserted into the conditions, to avoid the need for any pre-commencement conditions as far as possible, given time

restrictions for having carried out the works under the HSHAZ project. More details will be supplied in the update report, but at this point, officers are confident of the attention to quality and workmanship which is being proposed.

- 6.7. On this basis, it is considered that the proposed repairs would preserve the architectural and historic interest of the Listed structures and therefore more widely, the character and appearance of the conservation areas.

#### **Other matters**

- 6.8 Officers have been in contact with other Council departments regarding the installation of the new lampposts, including the Planning (Natural Environment) Team, Transport Strategy, Highways, Environmental Protection, the Ecologist and Berkshire Archaeology. Their advice, for the developer's information, has been included in the proposed informatives, as relevant.

6.9 **Equalities Impact**

In determining this application, the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups as identified in the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular application. Therefore, In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 These four structures have been identified by the High Street HAZ project as key identifiers of Reading's historic past and are under Council ownership and/or maintenance and therefore a priority for heritage repairs now funding has become available. This proposal to clean and restore the four monuments is considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local planning policy, EN1, as detailed in the Appraisal above. The proposal would preserve the architectural and historic interest of the listed monuments and would therefore also preserve the character and appearance of the conservation areas in which they are located. As such, the grant of Listed Building Consent is recommended, subject to relevant conditions.

**Case Officer:** Nathalie Weekes

1) Zinzan Chest Tomb



2) Jubilee Cross



3) Simeon Monument



4 Queen Victoria Statue

