

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 4TH SEPTEMBER 2019

Ward: Minster

Application No.: 190936/LBC

Address: Yeomanry House, Castle Hill

Proposal: Part demolition and rebuilding north boundary wall and localised repair to loose and cracked brickwork

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Date received: 12th June 2019

Application target decision date: 7th August 2019

Agreed extension of time: 9th September 2019

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT Listed Building Consent

Conditions:

1. Three year LBC consent
2. Approved plans
3. Materials and method of workmanship (bond, mortar strike) to match the existing

Informatives

1. Terms and conditions
2. Positive and proactive
3. Tree Preservation Order
4. Applicant to seek relevant Licence from the Highway Authority for works which affect the footway.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Yeomanry House is located on the southern side of Castle Hill at the Coley Avenue and Bath Road junction and contains a Grade II listed Georgian property. The site is within the Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area and an Air Quality Management Area. The trees on site are subject to Tree Preservation Order 5/17. The site is currently vacant but was the former Council's Registration and Bereavement Service. The Berkshire Records Office is located to the west of the site.

2. PROPOSAL

2.1 Listed Building Consent is sought to repair and replace sections of the northern boundary wall which face on to Castle Hill. The wall has fallen in to disrepair which has been aggravated by lack of 'movement joints' and weathering. The wall itself is not listed however the curtilage of the Listed Building is covered as part of the Listed structure.

- 2.2 Full planning permission is not required for the works due to these not constituting 'development'. This is because the wall is being repaired/ re-built like-for-like.
- 2.3 Work is proposed to be carried out on a 35m length of the wall, starting where the wall abuts the boundary wall of residential block of Ridgeborough Court.
- 2.4 The 35m of wall is split in to 13 panels (see plan 2006 (L) 006 Proposed Elevations), with each panel of the wall being slightly taller than the previous due to the ascending topography as you move east to west.
- 2.5 Approximately 14m of the wall is proposed to be rebuilt with red-facing brick and lime mortar to match the existing wall. Hairline cracks in the wall to be repointed and loose brickwork is also to be repaired.
- 2.6 The works are to be carried out by Reading Borough Council and as this is a Council-own application, this proposal is being reported to your meeting.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

190722/LBC - Use of building as a day nursery. Internal and external alterations - Pending Consideration

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Reading Borough Council Heritage Consultant

No objections.

4.2 Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC)

Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee supports the repair and rebuilding work on the boundary wall with two caveats:

1. The garden and the trees in the grounds of Yeomanry House are a significant feature within the setting of the listed building and its setting within the conservation area. We would like to be assured that there is a plan in place to minimise and mitigate the impact of the work on trees which may be contributing to the damage to the wall.

2. Assurance that a plan is in place for further investigation should any archaeological interest be discovered during the work.

Officer comment: The protection of protected trees by way of a condition is beyond the scope of a Listed Building Consent application. However an informative would be attached to the Listed Building Consent to remind the applicant to have due care to the trees within the vicinity when carrying out the works.

An informative relating to archaeology is not considered to be necessary given the response from Berkshire Archaeology stated below.

4.3 Berkshire Archaeology

Yeomanry House is in an area of archaeological interest, although investigations in 1998 in advance of the construction of the Berkshire Record Office to the rear and side of Yeomanry House did not reveal any archaeological remains. The proposal to part demolish, part repair the northern boundary wall, which is of recent origin, on the Castle Hill frontage is very modest as regards its archaeological impacts. On this basis no archaeological response is merited in this instance and no further action is therefore required as regards the buried archaeological heritage.

4.4 Public consultation

A site notice was displayed at the site. The time consultation period closed on 16th July 2019. The proposal was also advertised in the local newspaper.

4.5 No comments have been received.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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 the listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

5.2 In accordance with Part 13 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 (as amended) where a local planning authority requires listed building consent for the demolition, alterations or extension of a listed building in their area or conservation area consent for the demolition of a building within a conservation area in their area, the authority shall make application to the Secretary of State for that consent.

5.3 This application has been assessed against the following policies:

National

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008, 2015)

CS7 - Design and the Public Realm
CS33 - Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 **Effect on the Historic Character of the Listed Building and the setting on Heritage Assets**

6.2 The existing wall is a modern curtilage wall, which appears to have a partial retaining function. Its appearance is relatively neutral in the conservation area and in the context of the setting/curtilage of the Listed Building. It is not considered that the repairing and rebuilding of sections of the wall will be harmful to the setting of the Listed Yeomanry House, or the wider Castle Hill/Russell Street conservation area. As well as improving the safety of the wall,

the maintenance works are also considered to enhance the appearance and setting of these heritage assets and therefore be compliant with Policy CS33.

6.3 The overall height, width and depth of the wall will not differ from the existing. Materials have also been selected to match those of the existing wall. As such, the works would not be considered out of keeping with the surrounding area and are therefore compliant with Policy CS7.

7. EQUALITY

7.1 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the current application) that the protected groups would have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The proposal is considered acceptable given the current poor status of the wall. Materials have been sensitively selected to match the existing and the works are therefore compliant with design policies.

8.2 In addition the maintenance works are considered to enhance the setting of the listed Yeomanry House, wider Castle Hill/ Russell Street conservation area and the street scene generally.

Case officer: Connie Davis

Plans considered:

2006 (L) 001A - Location Plan
2006 (L) 002 - Block Plan
2006 (L) 003 - Existing Plan
2006 (L) 004 - Existing Elevations
2006 (L) 005 - Proposed Plan/ Section
2006 (L) 006 - Proposed Elevations

Received 13th June 2019



Horizontal displacement at movement joint.



Horizontal crack for repair.