

PLANNING COMMITTEE:	13 th March 2018
DIRECTORATE:	Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
HEAD OF PLANNING:	Peter Baguley
APPLICATION REF:	N/2018/0119
LOCATION:	Abington Museum Manor House Abington Park, Wellingborough Road
DESCRIPTION:	Listed Building Consent Application to illuminate the existing cupola (bell tower), fit cupola bird mesh and spike protection, improved courtyard lighting and improved front entrance door lighting
WARD:	Abington Ward
APPLICANT:	Northampton Museum & Art Gallery
AGENT:	Stimpson Walton Bond Architects
REFERRED BY:	Head of Planning
REASON:	Council owned land and is the applicant
DEPARTURE:	No

APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION:

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 **APPROVAL** subject to the conditions as set out below and for the following reason:

The proposed works would, subject to conditions, preserve this Grade I Listed Building's setting and features of special and historical interest as required by the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies BN5 and S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

2. THE PROPOSAL

2.1 The applicant has applied for Listed Building Consent to install lighting within the cupola (bell tower), install bird deterrents within the same structure and to install external lighting within the courtyard area.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 The application site consists of Abington Park Museum (which has been open since 1899), which was formerly Abington Abbey. The building was constructed in the early 16th century surrounding a quadrangle. The building was altered during the latter part of the 17th century, before seeing more alterations being carried out to the exterior in the 18th century. The building is largely two storeys with an attic and key features include corncicing, a parapet, dormers, pediments and

arches. The interior contains a number of important features, including framed roof to the Great Hall, tall mullioned windows that serve the Great Hall, panelling and plaster ceilings.

- 3.2 Due to the age and design of the building, its special features and historic use, it is a Grade I Listed Building. In addition, the application site is in close proximity to the Grade A (akin to Grade I) Listed Church of St Peter and St Paul and the Grade II Listed Abington Park Cottages.
- 3.3 The site is within Abington Park and as a result benefits from a great deal of prominence and is also within the Abington Park Conservation Area.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 N/1991/0107 – Structural, stonework and window repairs; redecoration; new ceiling linings; and damp proofing – Approved.
N/1992/1403 – Minor building works for public display of collections – Approved.
N/2016/1672 – Listed Building Consent for Phase 1 internal refurbishment and repairs to various areas at Abington Museum – Approved.
N/2017/0567 – Listed Consent Application for repositioning of 1no radiator and installation of 1no additional radiator to southern window wall in The Long Room – Approved.
N/2017/1420 – Listed Building Consent application for removal of display cabinets within east and west wings – Approved.

5. PLANNING POLICY

Statutory Duty

- 5.1 Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works to 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.
- 5.2 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities when considering development to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

5.3 National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the current aims and objectives for the planning system and how these should be applied. In delivering sustainable development, decisions should have regard to the mutually dependent social, economic and environmental roles of the planning system.

- 5.4 Paragraph 17 – Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
Paragraph 129 – Identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal.
Paragraph 132 – Great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets.
Paragraph 134 – Any harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

5.5 West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014)

The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) provides an up to date evidence base and considers the current Government requirements for plan making as it has been prepared in full conformity with the NPPF. Policies of particular relevance are:

BN5 – The Historic Environment and Landscape
S10 – Sustainable Development Principles

5.6 Northampton Local Plan 1997 (Saved Policies)

Due to the age of the plan, the amount of weight that can be attributed to the aims and objectives of this document are diminished, however, the following policy is material to this application:

E20 – New development

6. CONSULTATIONS/REPRESENTATIONS

Comments received are summarised as follows:

- 6.1 **NBC Conservation** – No objections but details of cable runs and the colour of light fittings within the courtyard should be secured.
- 6.2 **Councillor T. Ansell** – Fully support the application.

7. APPRAISAL

- 7.1 The introduction of the lighting to the cupola would generally enhance the appearance of the building and would also draw attention to this interesting architectural feature. In addition, the proposal includes low uplighters that would be sited within the architectural plinth that fits below the cupola, which would mean that the light installations themselves would not be unduly visible and, as such, would not significantly impact upon visual amenity.
- 7.2 It is also proposed that the cupola be fitted with bird deterrents. This would take the form of nylon mesh netting fitted horizontally to the underside of the cupola roof to prevent birds roosting, and would be an unobtrusive measure. The pigeon spikes sited around the bottom of the cupola will be visible from ground level but are necessary and have a limited form. In addition, any impacts would be fully reversible. Whilst these installations do represent the introduction of new features onto the cupola, any harm would be less than significant and would be outweighed by the wider public benefit of protecting the structure.
- 7.3 The proposed lighting within the courtyard would feature small scale installations that would not be unduly prominent on the grounds that they would be sited below the guttering. The lighting would also facilitate the use of the courtyard for evening events, which would contribute to the overall use of the site and support its ongoing viability and vitality. In order to create a good standard of development, conditions are recommended that would enable the Council to approve details of cable runs and the colour of the light fittings. This would ensure that they have a neutral appearance of the general appearance and setting of the Listed Building.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The proposed works are of a relatively small nature that would not cause significant harm to the character and setting of the Listed Building. Furthermore, the proposal is of some benefit in terms of highlighting key architectural elements of the building and assisting in the on-going use of the courtyard area.

9. CONDITIONS

- 1. The works hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: To comply with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 2017-61-301; 2017-61-302; 2017-61-303; 2017-61-304; 2017-61-305; 2017-61-306; 2017-61-307; 2017/61/210; and 2017/61/210.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to accord with the terms of the listed building consent application.

3. Notwithstanding the details submitted, full details of external cable runs shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of securing a satisfactory standard of development, in accordance with the requirements of Policy BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

4. Notwithstanding the details submitted, full details of the colour of the external courtyard lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of securing a satisfactory standard of development, in accordance with the requirements of Policy BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 N/2018/0119.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None.

12. SUMMARY AND LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

12.1 In reaching the attached recommendations regard has been given to securing the objectives, visions and priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan together with those of associated Frameworks and Strategies.

