
APPLICATION NO.	21/03023/LBWN
APPLICATION TYPE	LISTED BUILDING WORKS - NORTH
REGISTERED	14.10.2021
APPLICANT	The Cambian Group
SITE	Grateley House School, Pond Lane, Grateley, SP11 8TA GRATELEY
PROPOSAL	Demolition of wall
AMENDMENTS	None
CASE OFFICER	Miss Emma Jones

Background paper (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application is presented to Northern Area Planning Committee at the request of a Member for the reason that they are “*very concerned about the proposed loss of a heritage asset, of its current condition and the owner’s failure to properly maintain it as a heritage asset over the years. There are no reasonable justifications as to why the owner cannot repair it or rebuild in it using traditional building methods and materials*”. The Member has advised that they “*would like to call forward this planning application to the Northern Area Planning Committee, as it raises matters more than general public interest*”.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site contains a school which provides accommodation and education facilities for pupils aged between 9 and 19, who suffer from Autism or associated conditions. The site is located within the village of Grateley, and within the Grateley Conservation Area. The main school building (Grateley House) is grade II listed, and there are a number of more modern buildings, associated infrastructure and paraphernalia within the grounds. The existing wall, subject of this application, is curtilage listed.

3.0 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal seeks to demolish an existing curtilage listed wall within the site, which the application advises “*is in a state of decay and poses an immediate health and safety risk to the students*”. The length of wall to be removed is approximately 27m, with a height of approximately 2.25m. The wall is constructed from a variety of materials, but predominately of blockwork and cement render. The wall has a tile capping.

4.0 HISTORY

- 4.1 There is an extensive planning history in respect of this site, but none of which is considered to be relevant to the current proposal.

5.0 **CONSULTATIONS**

5.1 **Conservation**; No objection;

- The application proposes removal of a length of wall. The heritage statement notes that the wall is considered to be curtilage listed, and includes historic mapping showing it in situ from the late 19thC onwards;
- A structural report has been submitted with the application, which highlights various concerns. Some of the problems which the wall is experiencing seem to arise from a lack of timely and regular maintenance. This would not normally be considered justification for demolition of historic structures;
- It is, however, noted that much of the wall (up to 70%) appears to be of concrete blockwork construction, which reduces the heritage value of the wall;
- Loss of the wall will further erode the appreciation of the house's original setting, though the greater harm has already been done by the erection of the existing classroom block;
- It is regrettable that the wall has been degraded, both in terms of remaining historic fabric and its relationship to the house, and it is considered that this has caused harm to the significance of the site. However, the harm has already reached the point at which the wall no longer contributes much to the site, and its repair would not be sufficient to reinstate its value.

6.0 **REPRESENTATIONS** Expired 25.11.2021

6.1 None received at the time of writing this report. Any representations that are received will be reported in an update paper to Committee.

7.0 **POLICY**

7.1 Government Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

7.2 Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016)(RLP)

E9 - Heritage

8.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1 The main planning consideration in this instance is the impact of the proposals on the significance of heritage assets.

8.2 **Heritage**

Policy E9 of the RLP requires development to make a positive contribution to sustaining or enhancing the significance of heritage assets, taking account of their character, appearance and setting (criterion a and b). The policy also sets out that development which will result in the substantial harm to or loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset will not be permitted unless: it is outweighed by the substantial benefit to the public of bringing the site back into use; or the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable use; and its conservation cannot be achieved by either a viable alternative use, support from public ownership or funding from other sources; and the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use (criterion c - f).

8.3 RLP policy E9 also sets out that the Council will only permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset where it can be demonstrated that the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred. The supporting text to the policy (paragraph 7.79) advises that “*the harm or loss of part or whole of a heritage asset will need to be justified as such assets are irreplaceable and should be retained wherever possible and feasible. Where the proposal would result in the substantial harm or loss of a designated heritage asset the Council will require evidence that there are considerable public benefits to justify its loss or that there are no other mechanisms for supporting the retention of the asset in the medium term.....The condition of an historic building resulting from deliberate damage and neglect will not be taken into account in any decision*”.

8.4 The statutory duty of 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 listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess, and section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the LPA to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

8.5 In respect of this current proposal, the designated heritage assets to take into consideration are the listed building at Grateley House School, the curtilage listed wall subject of this application, and the Grateley Conservation Area.

8.6 *Listed buildings*

The submitted heritage statement notes that the existing wall is considered to be curtilage listed, and includes historic mapping showing it in situ from the late 19th Century onwards. The proposal would result in the loss of this designated heritage asset, and it is not proposed that any new structure or works would replace the wall following its demolition. No compelling evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that the special circumstances set out by criterion c – f of RLP policy E9 (see paragraph 8.2 of this report), to justify the proposed loss of the significance of this designated heritage asset, are relevant in this instance. Therefore the proposal would result in a conflict with the requirements of RLP policy E9. However in this case, there are other material considerations that need to be taken into account in the determination of the proposals.

8.7 *Material considerations*

A structural report has been submitted with the application, which highlights various concerns. These include the varied construction and non-conventional building technique (no movement joints or damp course) used for the wall, together with defects such as vertical cracks and failed tiled capping. The submitted tree survey report also identifies an existing mature tree at the southern end of the wall, the canopy of which is touching the wall copings and has compressed them. The report also advises that the roots of the tree will be adjacent to the wall foundations, and that it is very likely that the roots will be exerting a significant force against the wall which may have been a contributory factor in its failure.

8.8 Some of the historic deterioration of the wall may have arisen from insufficient maintenance. This would not normally be considered justification for the demolition of historic structures. It is, however, noted that much of the wall (up to 70%) appears to be of concrete blockwork construction, with cement render, which reduces the heritage value of the wall. The wall is also physically and visually separated from the listed Grateley House by modern classroom buildings, such that they are not seen in conjunction with each other. The wall is therefore not considered to contribute much to the significance of the site, and its repair would not be sufficient to reinstate its value.

8.9 On the basis of the above, it is considered that there would be no harm caused to the designated heritage assets at the site.

8.10 *Conservation Area*

Wider views of the existing wall from outside the site are limited due to the modern development that surrounds it, and it is considered that it does not make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is considered that the proposal would not lead to any harm to the significance of the Conservation Area.

9.0 **CONCLUSION**

9.1 The proposed works would be in conflict with the requirements of RLP policy E9, through the unjustified loss of a designated heritage asset with no replacement proposed. However, it is considered that there are material considerations that weigh in favour of this proposal. In considering the condition of the existing wall, caused in part by its construction materials and building technique resulting in various defects, and that limited historic fabric remains, it is considered that to repair it would not reinstate the contribution that it would have originally made to the significance of the site. Furthermore, the existing wall is not considered to make an important contribution to the significance of the listed Grateley House, due to being physically and visually separated from it. The proposal would also not result in any harm to the significance of the Conservation Area. As a result of this, it is considered that the proposed works would sustain the significance of the listed Grateley House, and the Grateley Conservation Area.

9.2 The application is contrary to the provisions of an approved Development Plan. The application had not initially been advertised as such, however an amended publicity of the application is currently taking place. The recommendation below reflects this.

10.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

Delegate to the Head of Planning and Building that subject to no unresolvable objections being received within the amended publicity period then CONSENT subject to:

- 1. The works hereby consented to shall be begun within three years from the date of this permission.**

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2. The works hereby consented to shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers;**
 - (00)-01 P1;**
 - (100)-01 P1**

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Note to applicant:

- 1. The site is situated within the Grateley Conservation Area. In conservation areas, notice is required for works to trees that have a trunk diameter of more than 75mm when measured at 1.5m from ground level (or more than 100mm if reducing the number of trees to benefit the growth of other trees). Damage to these trees is an offence under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Tree damage may lead to the prosecution of those undertaking the work and those causing or permitting the work.**
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