



FAO: Planning Department,
Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

Ref: 6/2020/1028/LB
Date: 12/06/2020

HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION ADVICE

Dear Sir / Madam,

RE: 1-5 Park Street, Hatfield, AL9 5AT

The application is for the installation of internal wall and doorway.

The building is Grade II listed and located within the Old Hatfield Conservation Area. Originally constructed as an inn (The Chequers) in the 17th century, it has undergone substantial extensions and alterations in later centuries including a thorough refurbishment in the 1970s.

Planning permission and listed building consent (6/2018/2497/FULL and 6/2018/2498/LB) have been granted for the conversion of the building to flats. During the conversion works wall paintings were discovered on the first floor. The most significant of these is a well-preserved wall painting of a chimera with a lion's head between decorative columns found along the first floor corridor, potentially dating to the early 17th century. It has survived beneath late 17th century-early 18th century timber panelling on the lower half of the wall and lath and plaster on the upper part of the wall. The approved scheme proposed an opening through this wall which is no longer acceptable due to the loss of the highly significant wall painting. The current proposal is to move the doorway into the corner of the adjacent room and preserve the wall painting in situ.

There are no objections to this proposal as it preserves fabric of high significance. The proposed doorway will see the loss of some panelling, likely 18th century in date, however, this is considered to be acceptable in this case.

The "PROPOSED 1ST FLOOR WALL DETAIL" drawing (SP_00_01, rev. A) shows the detail of the new wall to be installed in the room at the front of the building to protect another wall painting. This is considered to be the most appropriate solution to prevent potential future damage to this particular wall painting. However, this drawing shows the previously approved first floor layout with the doorway through the corridor wall; this should be removed from the drawing and replaced with the now proposed first floor.

Whilst there are no objections to the proposed doorway, there are no details of the reinstatement of the lath and plaster in front of the wall painting. This work needs to be done with great care to



ensure the wall painting is not damaged. A breathable board, possibly a wood fibre board, may be appropriate but further details of this are required including methods of fixing.

It is also recommended that the wall painting is fully recorded by a historic building specialist prior to it being covered, this can be reserved by condition or provided as part of the application.

It is suggested that drawing no. SP_00_01, rev. A is revised and additional details regarding the covering of the wall painting in the corridor are sought prior to the determination of this application.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. R. Kitts". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized.

Maria Kitts BA (Hons) MA PGCert
Senior Built Heritage Consultant
Place Services

Note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter