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Direct Dial: 01223 582751

Our Ref: L01250730

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Dear Sarah Madyausiku

## **Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2015**

**1-5 Park Street, Hatfield, Hertfordshire, AL9 5AT**  
**Application No. 6/2020/1028/LB**

Thank you for your letter regarding the above application for listed building consent. Due to current restrictions we have been unable to visit the site but, on the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

### **Historic England Advice**

#### The Site

1-5 Park Street is an important timber framed building possibly dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It was used as an inn and was associated with a brewery to the west of the site. The landlords of this inn promoted the introduction of hopped beer to the area and they seem to have been successful. The building was divided into shops in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was heavily 'restored' in the 1970's by the commission for new towns which was highly destructive of much of the historic fabric.

In 2019 traces of wall paintings were discovered which were dated to the late 16<sup>th</sup> or early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. These were discovered under later fabric and are well preserved at present. These paintings give us evidence of a richly painted interior and show that historic buildings were not originally monochrome. The building has been recently upgraded in the list to grade II\* in order to reflect its importance.

#### The Impact of the proposed scheme

Permission was granted in 2019 for the conversion of this building to residential flats in the process of this wall paintings were discovered. Since this time, the owner has worked with the Local Authority on a scheme to cover over the wall paintings in order to conserve them going forward.

The scheme being considered is to cover the paintings with a lime covered wood fibre board from The Lime Centre. This is a breathable material and is a suitable material to be used in this location.



As permission has already been granted for the use of the building as residential units, access must be provided and therefore an opening needs to be made in unit 3. Although this results in the loss of part of a historic wall, it means the wall painting can be preserved in situ and its context preserved.

A full archaeological report has been provided which records the building but no information has been provided of the fixing of the woodfibre board to the building. This should be provided.

### Policy Context

Paragraph 193 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (the more important the asset, the greater that weight should be)

Paragraph 194 states that any harm to, or loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction or from development within its setting should require clear and convincing justification.

### Historic England's position

Historic England supports this scheme and finds that it will result in a low level of harm to the building through the loss of part of an internal wall but, will conserve the important wall paintings in situ with appropriate materials. We therefore consider that it is in accordance with paragraphs 193 and 194 of the NPPF.

We do however ask that consideration be given to a condition requiring the details of fixing of the wood fibre board to the surrounding lathe and plaster be provided.

### **Recommendation**

Historic England supports the application on heritage grounds as it would result in a scheme which preserves important late 16<sup>th</sup> or early 17<sup>th</sup> century wall painting in an appropriate manner.

We consider that the application meets the requirements of the NPPF, in particular paragraph numbers 193 and 194.

In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 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 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Your authority should take these representations into account in determining the application. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us. Please advise us of the decision in due course.



Historic England

Yours sincerely

**Lynette Fawkes**

Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas

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