OFFICER REPORT

Case No: 25/00977/LBC Listed Building Consent

Proposal: Listed Building Consent for minor internal works, including new floor coverings, fixed seating and new drinks shelf with screen, with new timber posts and festoon lighting to the beer garden with new planter units, extension of existing polycarbonate roofing sheet

Location: Public House The Old Sun 161 Great North Road

Applicant: Mr Michael Twigg

Grid Ref: 516947 258977

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The property is a Grade II listed public house located within the Eaton Socon Conservation Area. It is a two storey detached building finished in white render and with a tiled roof. The Old Sun Pub is located on the main thoroughfare and is surrounded by modern residential dwellings as well as several listed buildings, including the Wagon and Horses pub and Eaton House.

Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

The application is for minor internal works, including new floor coverings, fixed seating and new drinks shelf with screen, with new timber posts and festoon lighting to the beer garden with new planter units, extension of existing polycarbonate roofing sheet.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) (NPPF 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'

The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):
* delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
* building a strong, competitive economy;
* achieving well-designed places;
* conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.

For full details visit the government website: https://www.gov.uk

PLANNING POLICIES

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019)

LP12: Design Implementation
LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017):
* Place Making Principles - Part 3.8 Building Detailing

St Neots Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029 (2016)
* Policy A3 – Design
* Policy SS2 – Utilising Historic Buildings

St Neots Conservation Area Character Assessment (October 2006)

Local policies are viewable at https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

PLANNING HISTORY

78/00056/LBC - Alterations and Change of Use - consent granted 06.03.1978
94/01600/FUL & 94/01601/LBC - Extension and alterations to Public House - consent granted 06.02.1995
0300879LBC - Internal alterations - consent granted 29.05.2003
25/00804/ADV - Installation of replacement signs to include 1x new pictorial panel to existing gibbet, 1x set of sign written house name, 2x door plaque, 3x floodlights, 1x amenity board, 1x lantern, 1x single sided post mounted directional sign, 1x welcome panel – consent granted 03.07.2025
25/00805/LBC - Installation of replacement signs to include 1x new pictorial panel to existing gibbet, 1x set of sign written house name, 2x door plaque, 3x floodlights, 1x amenity board, 1x lantern, 1x single sided post mounted directional sign, 1x welcome panel and repainting of building – consent granted 03.07.2025
25/00976/FUL - Minor internal works and external works to include new timber posts, lighting, planters and extension of existing polycarbonate roofing sheet - pending consideration

CONSULTATIONS

St Neots Town Council recommends approval and considers that the proposal improves the property.

HDC Conservation Team recommends approval. The modernising of the interior and exterior has a neutral impact on the significance of the listed building and a neutral impact on the significance and character of St Neots Conservation Area.

REPRESENTATIONS

No objections received at time of determination.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
o Impact on Heritage Assets

* Impact on Heritage Assets

Policy LP12 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 state that developments should respond positively to their context, draw inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings and contribute positively to the area's character and identity.

Policy LP34 states that a proposal within, affecting the setting of, or affecting views into or out of, a conservation area should preserve, and wherever possible enhance, features that contribute positively to the area's character, appearance and setting as set out in character statements or other applicable documents.

The Council will consider the significance of a designated heritage asset and where there is less than substantial harm, this will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Where there is deemed to be substantial harm, then the proposal would need to achieve substantial public benefits to outweigh that harm.

Section 16(2) of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 (as amended) requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 66 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall 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.

Section 72 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 (as amended) states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

Para. 212 of the NPPF set out that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'. Para. 213 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…'.

Local Plan policy LP34 aligns with the statutory provisions and NPPF advice.

The application is for minor internal works, including new floor coverings, fixed seating and new drinks shelf with screen, with new timber posts and festoon lighting to the beer garden with new planter units, extension of existing polycarbonate roofing sheet.

The Conservation Team has been consulted on the proposals and consider that the proposal has a neutral impact on the significance of the Listed Building. The existing functionality of the space could be improved, and the proposed changes enhance the space and retain the character, historical and architectural significance of the building.

Officers have had special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Officers have given special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the

Conservation Area. It is considered that harm will not be caused to either of these designated heritage assets because the works will have a neutral impact on the significance of the Listed Building and a neutral impact on the significance and character of the Conservation Area.

The proposal, therefore, accords with ss. 16, 66 & 72 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990, paragraphs 202-221 of the NPPF (2024), Policies LP12 and LP34 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019) and Policies A3 and SS2 of the St Neots Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029 (2016) in this regard.

*Conclusion
The proposed works are considered to be compliant with the relevant national and local policy as they:

* Would not have a harmful impact upon the designated heritage asset;

Taking national and local planning policies into account, and having regard for all relevant material considerations, it is recommended that listed building consent be granted, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

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