HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

24/02067/HHFUL

OFFICER REPORT

Case No: **24/02067/HHFUL** **Householder (Full)**

Proposal: **Cement render removal of north wall; Patch repairs & redecoration of north & west walls; Weatherproofing detailing & repairs; North parapet brick repairs & lead capping installation.**

Location: **Oaklands 26 High Street Bluntisham**

Applicant: **Mr Donald Buchan**

Grid Ref: **536770 274711**

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The application site at Oaklands 26 High Street is occupied by a two-storey semi-detached dwellinghouse located within a residential area in Bluntisham. The dwelling is a Grade II Listed Building, and the site falls within the Bluntisham Conservation Area.

This application seeks permission for external material alterations to the dwelling. This involves the removal of cement render on the north wall, repairs and redecoration of the north and west walls, general weatherproof detailing, and the repairing of the north parapet brick with the installation of lead capping.

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

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, beautiful and safe 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)

LP11: Design Context
LP12: Design Implementation
LP14: Amenity
LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings

Neighbourhood Plan and relevant policies where applicable

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017):

* Place Making Principles parts 3.7 Building Form and 3.8 Building Detailing

Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (2022)

Bluntisham Conservation Area Character Assessment (1999)

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

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

24/00127/LBC - Remove the existing render, corbels and parapet walls and rebuild using reclaimed brick. Remedial work where necessary to the chimney stacks. New render to where it was removed using traditional lime render and two coats of mineral based Keim paint to the rendered surfaces. (Withdrawn)

24/02068/LBC - Cement render removal of north wall; Patch repairs & redecoration of north & west walls; Weatherproofing detailing & repairs; North parapet brick repairs & lead capping installation. (Pending Consideration)

CONSULTATIONS

Bluntisham Parish Council - Support the application as it is essential maintenance to the property.

HDC Conservation Team - Support the application subject to conditions, further details in preceding sections of this report.

REPRESENTATIONS

None received at the time of determination.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:

- Design and Visual Amenity
- Impact on Heritage Assets
- Residential Amenity

*Design and Visual Amenity

The application site at Oaklands, 26 High Street is occupied by a semi-detached, two storey Grade II Listed Building located within the Bluntisham Conservation Area. The surrounding area depicts the character of a typical rural town, and there are a number of additional Listed Buildings along High Street on which the application site is located. The works concern the north and west dwelling walls, including the chimney located on the north wall.

The north wall is finished in modern cement render and is currently in poor condition with multiple cracks and areas of bulging. As a result, the proposal seeks to remove this render to reveal the original brick underneath, making any necessary repairs to the brickwork. Additionally, the north wall is finished with a brick parapet standing above the slate roof, which is proposed to replace any damaged bricks, and the addition of lead capping on top of the bricks. The final developments on the north wall include the repointing and repairing of the chimney. The application also includes retaining and repairing the cement render on the west wall to the rear of the dwelling. This also involves the repainting of the render.

The proposal is considered to improve the condition of the existing exterior of the dwelling, thus enhancing the dwellings character and appearance and contributing positively to the areas character and identity. The proposal successfully integrates the dwelling within the street scene whilst also benefitting its visual amenity through the use of render in a cream colour to match existing, which is in line with HDC's Design Guide, as coloured render is encouraged to limit the need for future maintenance. This integration is further supported by the proposed use of new bricks that will be used for patch repairs that match the existing in scale, colour and size. Additionally, the removal of the modern cement render will also help to support the longevity of the dwelling and promotes high quality design in line with HDC's Local Plan, whilst reinstating the dwelling to its original look. Overall, taking these factors into consideration the proposed development therefore accords with Policies LP11 and LP12 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

*Impact on Heritage Assets

In assessing works to a Listed Building, it should be regarded that:

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 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. 205 of the NPPF sets 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. 206 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.

As this is the case, HDC's Conservation team have been consulted and having reviewed the documents have made the following comments which have been summarised below and are available in full on HDC's Public Access Site:

"Item 1 - Main House North Wall Cement Render Removal

Historic photos indicate that the render was applied post 1950. Cement render is considerably harder than historic brick with lime mortar and the materials are not compatible. The permeable brickwork will allow moisture to move through the fabric where it is trapped by the impermeable cement render causing spalling and a general loss of adhesion.

I have no objections to the removal of the render which will be of benefit to the preservation of the listed building. A condition to control materials is recommended.

Item 2 - Main House North Wall Parapet & North Apron Repairs

I have no objections to the repairs and rebuilding of the gable corbel, the proposed works will be of benefit to the preservation of the listed building. A condition to control materials is recommended.

Item 3 - North & West Chimney Repairs

I have no objections to the repairs of the chimneys; the proposed works will be of benefit to the preservation of the listed building. A condition to control materials is recommended.

Item 4 - Other Wall Render Repairs & Redecoration

The proposed repairs will be on a like for like basis and therefore do not constitute an alteration requiring listed building consent.

Conclusion

If undertaken sympathetically the proposed works should have a negligible impact upon the special interest of the listed building while improving its long-term preservation; the works will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. The proposals satisfy The Planning Act, the NPPF and Local Plan policies. I have no objections to the proposed works subject to conditions:

o If at any time during the proposed works hidden defects are revealed in the fabric of the listed building requiring further repairs or alterations to the scheme hereby granted consent, work on these areas shall cease and the applicant shall notify the Conservation Team who shall be invited to review the defects on site. An agreed scheme of repair shall then be submitted to the Local Authority for approval in writing and thereafter the works shall be carried out in accordance with that scheme.

o No works shall commence, until a sample of the proposed brick and details of the mortar for use in the works hereby approved, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

o The removal of the cement render shall only be undertaken using hand-held equipment and no power tools (air driven chisels, electric angle grinders etc) shall be used."

Having regard to the above assessment by the HDC Conservation Officer and having undertaken a site visit, it is clear that the proposal is considered to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Listed Building. Therefore, given the detail provided with the application alongside the supportive comments from the specialists, it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable with regards to its impact on the designated heritage assets, subject to the above conditions set out by HDC's Conservation Officer. It therefore accords with Policy LP34 of the Local Plan to 2036, the provisions of the NPPF (2024) and the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990.

*Residential Amenity

Given the scale and type of development proposed, alongside having regard to adjacent properties, it is not considered that there would be any unacceptable material impacts in terms of overbearing or loss of light, nor would there be any issues relating to overlooking or loss of privacy.

Overall, taking these factors into account the development is considered acceptable in terms of overshadowing, overbearing impact, overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light and would not have a

significant impact upon residential amenity and therefore accords with Policy LP14 of HDC's Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

*Conclusion

The proposed development is considered to be compliant with the relevant national and local policy as it:

* Is of an appropriate scale and design
* Would not have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the area;
* Would not have a harmful impact upon the designated heritage assets;
* Would not have a significantly detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbours.

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

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CONTACT OFFICER:
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