OFFICER REPORT

Case No: 25/00660/LBC Listed Building Consent

Proposal: Emergency structural works to save building.

Location: The Manor House High Street Bury

Applicant: Mr Evan Fowler

Grid Ref: 528702 283717

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

This application relates to a Grade ll Listed Building located in Bury and within the Bury Conservation Area. There are a number of other Listed Buildings in the vicinity including the Grade l Listed Holy Cross Church to the north.

This application seeks permission to carry out emergency structural works to the building, a section of which is at risk of collapse and was supported by scaffolding at the time a site visit was completed. This application (and the associated planning application - 25/00661/HHFUL) follows consultation with the Council's Conservation Team.

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.

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

PLANNING POLICIES

Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 (2019)

LP2: Strategy for Development
LP30: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings

Bury Village Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036 (May 2021) Policy

G1 - Definition of 'Built-up-Area' (Settlement Boundary)

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017):

* Place Making Principles part 3.7 Building Form

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

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

22/01315/LBC - Structural repair/rebuilding works to south-west gable (Consent)
25/00661/HHFUL - Emergency structural works to save building (Pending consideration - associated with this application)

CONSULTATIONS

Bury Parish Council - No representations received at the time of determination.
HDC's Conservation Team - No objections - further details in the proceeding sections of this report.
Historic England - No comments to make - seek views of internal heritage advisers.

REPRESENTATIONS

None received at the time of determination.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

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

- Impact upon the Designated Heritage Assets
- Biodiversity

* Impact upon the Designated Heritage Assets

The Manor House is located to the south of High Street in Bury which is the main route towards Bury and Ramsey from the direction of Warboys and other smaller settlements. It is not readily visible in the streetscene due to dense hedgerows to the northern boundary with High Street.

Consultation with the Council's Conservation Team has been undertaken in advance of the application being submitted as there are structural issues with the northern wall of the building. The walls are moving due to subsidence and water ingress which has affected its integrity and risks collapse. This proposal involves removal of parts of the inner wall fabric, the shoring up of the window apertures and ties to the wall and the rebuilding of the external masonry on a like-for-like basis where necessary (as with previous works to the dwelling). A large proportion of the works will be internal.

As detailed in the preceding sections of this report, the building is Grade II Listed, in the setting of other Listed Buildings (including a Grade I Listed Church) and within the Bury Conservation Area.

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. 212 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. 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.

In this case the application is accompanied by a Heritage Statement and both Historic England and HDC's Conservation Team have been consulted. Historic England had no comments to make and recommended that the views of internal heritage advisers were sought. As detailed in the preceding sections of this report, Conservation Officers have been involved since the early stages and having reviewed the submitted details are in agreement that the works are required in order to prevent future degradation of the building and secure its longevity. Overall, they raise no objections subject to conditions.

Overall, having regard to the earlier assessment as to the need for the works, neutral wider harm and the favourable comments from specialists (as above). It is considered that the development is acceptable with regard to its impact on the designated heritage assets and therefore accords with Policy LP34 of the Local Plan to 2036, the provisions of the NPPF (2024) and the Planning (listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

*Biodiversity

It is noted that a biodiversity checklist has been submitted with the application which incorrectly states that no demolition or removal of any part of a gabled pre-1914 building will be undertaken. Generally, this would require further investigation and the submission of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

However, in this case, it should be realised that the building is an occupied and maintained residential dwelling. Works have already been undertaken in order to support the building (scaffolding in place at the time of the visit) and Conservation Officers have photographs of the internal exposure which has already been undertaken. Therefore, on balance, it is concluded that if there was any risk of harm then this is already likely to have occurred. Planning balance must also consider the merits of a proposal on the full suite of policies available. In this case, there is clear concern regarding the integrity of a designated heritage asset and the proposed works will secure its longevity. Whilst this does not absolve the applicant or their appointed contractors of their responsibilities in terms of preventing wildlife crime (and an informative note shall be added to the consent in this respect), it is concluded that the benefits of pursuing this further at this stage balanced against the merits of the proposal would be minimal. The scheme therefore broadly accords with Policy LP30 of the Local Plan to 2036.

*Conclusion

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

* They would not result in harm to the designated heritage assets
*They are acceptable in terms of biodiversity impacts.

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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CONTACT OFFICER:
Enquiries about this report to **Kevin Simpson**