HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

25/00378/LBC

OFFICER REPORT

Case No: **25/00378/LBC** **Listed Building Consent**

Proposal: **Installation of an Access Lift at Lower Ground Floor Level to give wheelchair users access to the Sixth Form Centre**

Location: **Kimbolton Castle London Road Kimbolton**

Applicant: **Jennifer Agnew**

Grid Ref: **510087 267612**

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

Kimbolton Castle is Grade I Listed and is located with the Kimbolton Conservation Area and is close to large number of Grade II Listed Buildings along the main high street of Kimbolton. It stands on the location of a twelfth century moated site with elements of the Tudor Castle remaining. Its appearance predominantly dates from the early 18th century. It was sold to Kimbolton School in 1950. The proposed works are for the installation of an access lift at lower ground floor level to give wheelchair users access to the Sixth Form Centre.

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 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)

LP12: Design Implementation
LP34: Heritage Assets and their Settings

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

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

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

PLANNING HISTORY

8200492LBC – Fence to replace wall – permission granted 15.06.1982
8901507LBC – Erection of satellite dish – consent granted 29.09.1989

CONSULTATIONS

Kimbolton & Stonely Parish Council has no comments or objections to the proposal.

HDC Conservation Team – No objection. It is noted that the proposal will not have a lasting impact on the special interest of the listed building. The application is fully detailed and therefore no further conditions are considered necessary.

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.

Kimbolton Castle is a grade I listed building within the Kimbolton 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 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 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.

The proposed works are for the installation of an access lift at lower ground floor level to give wheelchair users access to the Sixth Form Centre. It is noted that the proposed platform lift is necessary to allow access to the building by a wheelchair using student of Kimbolton School. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on educational institutions to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students, including modifications to physical features. This is balanced by the statutory requirement of the owner to preserve the special interest of the listed building. Historic England advice indicates that:
"Passenger and platform lifts are best located in the less-sensitive parts of historic buildings, for example secondary staircases and light wells or in areas that have already been disturbed or altered." Easy Access to Historic Buildings – Historic England, Reissued 2015.

The submitted Heritage Statement demonstrates that the proposed location of the lift is within a secondary staircase and that this is an area that has already been disturbed. The proposed lift will be minimally bolted to existing fabric and will be fully reversible in the future.

HDC Conservation Team has been consulted on the proposal and has no objections to the application, noting that it will have no lasting impact on the special interest of the listed building. In addition, the application is fully detailed and therefore conditions to the consent are not considered necessary.

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. It is considered that there will be no lasting impact on the special interest of the listed building. Any harm to the listed building will be outweighed by the public benefit of providing access to the building by wheelchair users. The proposal, therefore, accords with ss. 16, 66 & 72 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990, paragraphs 202-221 of the NPPF (2024), and Policies LP12 and LP34 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019) 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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CONTACT OFFICER:
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