



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 July 2024

by I A Dyer BSc (Eng) FCIHT

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 January 2025

Appeal: APP/H0520/Y/24/3337679

14 London Road, Wansford, PE8 6JB

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Darrell Bailey against the decision of Huntingdonshire District Council.
 - The application reference is 21/00553/LBC.
 - The works are internal and external alterations at Barnaby House, Wansford.
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This decision is issued in accordance with section 56 (2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended and supersedes that issued on 11 December 2024.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to all works other than those set out below.
2. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted insofar as it relates to: -
 - The repointing of the front façade of the listed building;
 - The retention of all gutters, hoppers and downpipes on the rear façades of the building;
 - The replacement of all gutters, hoppers and downpipes on the front façade of the building;
 - The retention of the garden gate;
 - The retention of the works to the outhouse;
 - The repair of cornices on the dormer windows identified; and
 - The repair of render on dormer windows.

at 14 London Road, Wansford, PE8 6JB in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 21/00553/LBC, subject to the attached schedule of conditions.

Application For Costs

3. An application for costs was submitted by Mr Darrell Bailey against Huntingdonshire District Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters

4. As the appeal building is in a conservation area and relates to a listed building I have had special regard to sections 16(2) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) (the Act).
5. The application form submitted with the proposal included an @ symbol in the description of the works. I have substituted the word "and" for this in my banner heading in order to clarify the works proposed.
6. At the time of my site visit some of the works had already been carried out and I was able to observe them in situ. The works are therefore, in part, retrospective and I have determined the appeal on this basis. Whilst, at the time of my site visit, other works had been undertaken that are not within the description of works applied for, these are beyond the scope of this appeal and are an enforcement matter.
7. In view of this the description of the works was changed by the Council from that which set out in the application form to "retain unauthorised works and for a programme of proposed works to Barnaby House". In the interests of clarity, I have used the same description for the purposes of this appeal.
8. However, for the reasons that follow, I find some elements of the works to be acceptable and clearly severable both physically and functionally from others. Therefore, I intend to issue a split decision in this case and grant consent for those elements that are acceptable and can be carried out in isolation. It is possible for me to separate the works thus, as an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State to determine this appeal. Such an option was not available to the Council.
9. To this end I have separated the external works, specifically the pointing and gutter work, and works to the outhouse and garden wall, from those internal to the listed building. Whilst some of the internal works are physically severable from each other they act as a whole to achieve the single intent of converting the building to a single dwelling. They are not, therefore, functionally separable from each other.
10. The external works, however, have clearly separable functions in carrying out ongoing maintenance of the building and refurbishing a separable outhouse.
11. The evidence before me notes that some works within the original proposal have been omitted. However, no amended plans have been submitted and I have determined this appeal on the basis of the information as shown on the application drawings and explained in the accompanying Design, Access and Heritage Statement (the DAHS).
12. For ease of reference, I have used the numbering of the rooms and windows provided within the "Ground and First Floor Plans as Existing" (Plan No 1071/4) and that for windows shown on Proposed Ground and First Floor Plans (Plan No 1071/6) and Proposed Second Floor Plans and Elevations (Plan No 1071/7) for identification within the listed building layout.

Main Issues

13. The main issues are whether the works would preserve a Grade II listed building known as "Barnaby House and Outbuilding and Garden Boundary Wall

to Rear” (Ref: 1237717) (the LB), and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses and the extent to which it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Wansford Conservation Area (the CA).

Reasons

The heritage assets

14. The CA, within which the LB lies, reflects its origins as a trading port and staging post on the former alignment of the Great North Road. It is a collection of substantial, stone buildings, varying in scale and design, set around a bridge and former wharfage on the River Nene. The design and materials used in these buildings reflects locally available, traditional materials, such as stone and timber. Its mercantile history is reflected in the growth and proliferation of inns, including the prominent “Haycock”, and the LB which is also a former inn. During my site visit I observed that whilst many of the local buildings had, at some time, been renovated, many retain historic features, including sash, casement and other designs of windows, representative of traditional design and materials.
15. As an inn within the core of the CA, built using traditional materials and workmanship, the appeal building contributes to the large grouping of stone buildings, several having associations with the hospitality trade, of varying design, reflective of changing taste and fashion that make up the historic core of Wansford and thereby the character and appearance of the CA.
16. Given the above, I find that the significance of the CA, insofar as it relates to this appeal, to be primarily associated with the traditional design and materials of the buildings and the contribution that fenestration makes to the historic appearance of the street scene.
17. The LB dates from the 18th century, with 19th century alterations. It is built of coursed, dressed limestone under a Collywestern stone slate roof. It is a two-storey, former coaching inn with attics, later used by a residential school. More recently the building was used as additional accommodation for The Haycock, before being used as bedsit accommodation for hotel staff. Most recently it has been used as a dwellinghouse, although only one flat has been created on the second floor. The rest of the building is in a dilapidated state and uninhabited. Its former stables have also now been converted to residential use¹ and are in separate ownership.
18. To the street the LB features two ground floor canted bay windows with hipped roofs and hung sashes flanking a central four-panelled door with a rectangular fanlight and a flat canopy featuring a moulded cornice and soffit panel. The first floor has three 12-pane 19th century sash windows.
19. Whilst altered, the building nevertheless retains a significant proportion of its historic features and traditional materials. As such it remains a good example of a modest coaching inn of the period. Given the above, I find that the special interest of the LB, insofar as it relates to this appeal, to be primarily associated with its historic character derived from architectural detailing and its use of traditional materials.

¹ Councils Refs: 0101776FUL and 0101777LBC

The external works

20. Externally the works would carry out repointing of the facing limestone. Whilst the application information does not identify the extent of the repointing, or provide method statements or specifications, the appellant has provided clarification that all facades and the garden wall are to be repointed over their entire surface. During my site visit I observed that the elevations to the rear of the appeal property and the garden wall had already been repointed. I also observed that pointing on the front façade was, generally, in a poor condition and inappropriate repairs had taken place.
21. Extensive repointing has already been undertaken on the rear elevation and garden wall. There is no information on the condition of the wall prior to the works. Thus, it has not been demonstrated that such wholesale replacement was necessary and in the course of these works some historic fabric has been removed unnecessarily. Nor has it been demonstrated that, whilst the appellant states that sand/cement mortar was used in the past and that lime mortar has been used in the pointing, neither the pointing profiles nor composition of the mortar used in repointing has been demonstrated as appropriate to the LB. Repointing of the external faces of the walls could be carried out as a clearly separable part of the works and the works to the front and rear elevations and the garden walling could be similarly separated. The resultant works are, therefore, harmful to the special interest of the LB.
22. A dilapidation survey, identifying and detailing the extent and nature of the damage, together with a method statement for the cleaning of the stonework and pointing works could be secured for the front elevation through an appropriately worded condition. This would not, however, address any harm that has already occurred to the rear elevations and garden wall which is an enforcement matter beyond the scope of this appeal.
23. The works would replace all gutters, hoppers and downpipes. This work is clearly separable from other parts of the works and, again, works to the front and rear of the property are physically separable. The existing roof drains to a mix of uPVC and iron elements. At the time of my site visit the ironware on the front façade appeared severely corroded and ill-maintained, whilst much of the works had been carried out to the rear. I observed extensive staining on the front façade of the building where water had overflowed the gutter. Ineffective roof drainage could lead to deterioration the rapid deterioration of the fabric of the LB and damage through water ingress. UPVC is an inauthentic material and the water drainage system is a highly visual element on the elevations of the LB. Given this, the replacement of this element of the roof drainage with an effective ironwork system would be beneficial in terms of the use of traditional materials that would safeguard the fabric of the LB from further harm from water runoff.
24. To the rear the fitted elements have an appearance and materiality appropriate to the period and detailing of the building. The detailing of the work to the front could be secured through an appropriately worded condition.
25. The submitted plans indicate repairs to the chimneys and the roof. However, no detailed works have been identified. In the absence of any detailed justification or schedule scoping the works it has not been demonstrated that they would preserve historic fabric.

26. The works include the replacement of a modern garden gate with a new ledge and braced timber gate. The gate provided would not be inauthentic to the period of the LB and is independent of any of the other works.
27. Works have taken place to remove and replace the roof of a small outhouse attached to the LB, which served as a boiler house. The appellant identifies that the outhouse has been partially rebuilt within the last 40 years. The front of the outbuilding has been dismantled and the bricks reused to increase the height of the front wall. The opening has been moved to a central position (identified on the plans as SE6) and a new door has been fitted. The corrugated iron roof has been replaced with an inverted flat roof and the parapet coping stones reinstated.
28. The replacement door is of a similar design to the new garden gate and is not visually inauthentic to the period of the LB. On the basis of the information before me the proposal would not involve the loss of historic fabric as the outbuilding appears to be a later addition to the LB. Thus, given that the outbuilding remains of a scale and design that is very much subservient to the main building I find that the works, as carried out, have not resulted in harm to the special interest of the LB. Furthermore, they are severable both physically and functionally from the other work.
29. The proposed works would repair rotten sections of cornice on the dormer windows. This would not affect historic fabric as the dormers are relatively new additions. There would, therefore, be no harm to the special interest of the LB. These works are clearly severable both physically and functionally from any others. Similarly, proposals to replace the cement render on these dormers and replace it with lime render would be beneficial. The chemical composition of the lime render could be controlled through the use of a suitably worded condition.
30. The work already carried out has repaired the masonry staircase and laid a new patio. The works have exposed a doorway and created a well that is not indicated on the plans. From the information before me I am unable to fully understand the scope of the works or their relevance to the special interest of the LB. It is possible that the works carried out have already removed important historic fabric.
31. Bringing these matters together I am satisfied that the following works would preserve the Grade II listed building and would not harm its significance as a designated heritage asset: -
 - The repointing of the front façade of the LB;
 - The retention of all gutters, hoppers and downpipes on the rear façades of the building;
 - The replacement of all gutters, hoppers and downpipes on the front façade of the building;
 - The retention of the garden gate;
 - The retention of the works to the outhouse;
 - The repair of cornices on the dormer windows identified; and
 - The repair of render on dormer windows.

32. The listed building is an integral part of the CA. The works on the front façade would have some effect on the appearance of the building which occupies a prominent location. However, given the current poor state of repair of the guttering and pointing the works affecting these would have a beneficial effect on the appearance of the building and, thereby that of the CA. Consequently, the character and appearance of the CA would be enhanced and hence its significance would be preserved.
33. However, I have found that the other proposed works would be harmful to the special interest of the building. These works are all to the rear of the building and are not visible from the public realm, nor widely visible from private viewpoints outside of the garden of the LB. I therefore find that these works would preserve the character and appearance of the CA, and hence not harm the significance of the CA as a whole.
34. Whilst there have been some benefits through replacing inappropriate mortar on the rear of the building so as to prevent further harm from the historic use of inappropriate material in repairs, this is offset by the lack of detail provided to justify the extent of the repointing works and material used. This harm would not be outweighed by the beneficial elements of the proposed changes to these buildings.

Internal works and openings

35. The appellant has provided clarification on discrepancies between their drawings and their schedule of works for the windows in as much as the schedule takes precedence. They have further clarified that the windows identified as NW4, NW5 and NW6 currently have historic frames, but that the sashes were replaced with modern sashes of varying designs. The schedule identifies that the works would retain the frames and replace the sashes to match the extant historic sashes on the window identified as SE3. The drawings accompanying the application remain, however, in conflict.
36. At the time of my visit the window openings for NW4 and NW5 were closed up outside and I was unable to observe the condition of the windows from within, due to the presence of stored building materials.
37. The works would repair, refurbish and/or replace the windows on all elevations. However, in all but the ground floor windows on the front elevation and the slimline door, identified as SW3 on the south-west elevation, the panes in replacement sashes would be double glazed with slimline units.
38. The existing sashes and frames are decayed and in need of repair or renovation and some are not historic sashes. However, with the exceptions noted, the proposed windows, in timber, would be double-glazed with slim-line units and the use of double glazing would lack authenticity as it would not be a like-for-like replacement of what would have originally been present. The greater reflectivity of the panes, even using slim-line units, and the limited lifespan of the double-glazing units would not reflect the longevity and craftsmanship associated with traditional sash windows.
39. The appellant has brought to my attention an appeal decision² from 2013 in Gloucestershire. Whilst that appeal involved the installation of slim line double glazing and was allowed by the Inspector I do not have the full planning history

² PINS Ref: APP/C/1625/E/12/20186460

of the appeal site. However, this appeal was determined some time ago and there have been changes to planning policy and guidance, both at local and national levels in the intervening decade. I do not have the full context of the listed building concerned but it does not inform the context of the LB which is the subject of this appeal and so I give this appeal decision very limited weight in my deliberations and I have, in any case, determined this appeal on its own merits.

40. Similarly, the appellant has brought to my attention a decision of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea³. However, no details have been provided of the history or context of that application and, again, it does not inform the context of the appeal site. I have therefore given this decision very limited weight in reaching my decision and have determined this appeal on its own merits.
41. In regard to the ground floor windows on the front elevation no works are proposed to the windows identified as NE7, NE9, NE11, and NE13. However, it is proposed to replace both sashes within the windows identified as NE8 and NE12. When on site I was unable to inspect the window sashes in detail, as the windows had been boarded up, whilst inside the building close inspection in Room 1 was prevented by the presence of stored building material. I did, however, gain some views of the interior of the sashes in Room 2 and these showed some indication of limited deterioration. In the absence of a detailed dilapidation report, it has not been demonstrated to me that repair is not a practical alternative, and that the complete replacement of the sashes, resulting in harmful loss of historic fabric, is consequently required.
42. Having regard to the first floor bedroom windows, whilst it is not a matter of dispute between the parties that the lower sash of the window identified as NE4 is rotten and needs replacement, the proposed replacement lacks horns and, therefore is not a like-for-like replacement and inappropriate. The replacement of the sashes of the windows identified as NE5 and NE6 would result in the loss of historic fabric and, in the absence of detailed dilapidation reports on the windows, this lacks any justification. The proposed works to replace the sashes of the window identified as SE5, which is again a historic window, are similarly unjustified.
43. The door identified as SW3 on the plans had been replaced at the time of my visit with a modern, slimline door of a design in keeping with the period of the building. As this replacement door is single glazed its replacement has not resulted in harm to the LB.
44. Moving on to the interior of the building and beginning with the proposed works on the ground floor, the floor has been replaced throughout with a solid floor supported on concrete over a compacted stone sub-base. Over this insulation has been provided and a liquid screen incorporating "wet" underfloor heating pipework. It is intended that 20mm Yorkstone floor slabs will be laid as a final finish. Whilst I am satisfied that no historic fabric has been removed to lay the floor, the concrete layer is likely to restrict the breathability of the floor and could result in damp, which would be harmful to the historic fabric of the LB.
45. Within Room 1 a timber cupboard would be relocated to its historic position. Given that this would return the cupboard to its earlier location from an

³ Council Ref: LB/09/02525

incongruous position in the middle of a wall this would have a beneficial effect overall on the special interest of the LB.

46. The appellant has removed infill from the fireplaces in Rooms 1 and 2. Whilst it is likely that these would have, historically, been open, the works have an unfinished appearance and detail is lacking in regard to the scope of the works. The appellant has stated that he will omit any further works, however, they are incomplete and the application drawings and DAHS were not amended to remove these proposals. I have therefore considered them, and their likely completion, as part of the proposed works. In these circumstances I cannot be certain that harm would not result to the LB through inappropriate works, harmful of the special interest of the LB, even were I to require the submission of details at a later date.
47. Within Room 2 the appellant has reopened, and widened, a former opening that gave onto a now demolished two storey rear extension that provided bathrooms for guest bedrooms. The detailing around the opening reflects other openings on the elevations to the rear of the building, with stone quoins. As such, minimal historic fabric is removed from the LB, whilst reopening an historic opening. However, the proposed door would incorporate slimline double-glazing which, as I have identified above, would be harmful to the appearance of the LB.
48. Within Room 2 the appellant has demolished part of the wall between that and Room 3. Whilst this wall formerly contained an opening, this is indicated in the appellants DAHS as having been towards the corner of the room. The current opening has removed historic fabric where no previous opening has been identified. This is intrinsically harmful to the special interest of the LB.
49. The works have also relocated a door within a wall separating Room 2 from the hall. The works to create the opening have already been carried out, but no door has been fitted. The wall within which the door sits is constructed of concrete block and is a modern addition from around 1997. As such no historic material has been lost. I therefore consider that this aspect of the works has not had a harmful effect on the special interest of the LB, subject to the imposition of an appropriate condition or conditions.
50. Within the ground floor hall the staircase work between the ground floor and the first floor has commenced to replace the staircase, retaining some historic elements. The appellant has provided a condition report and recommendations, prepared by Barford Joinery. This describes the overall condition of the stair as poor, having undergone multiple repairs without regard to its historic fabric and that the stair was no longer fit for purpose. The report recommends the salvaging and incorporation of the sound components (newel posts and decorative brackets) into a reconstructed staircase in a matching format to that previously within the building.
51. It is clear from the report that works are necessary to provide a safe means of access to the upper floors and that any suitable remaining historic fabric within the staircase can be salvaged for reuse. The detailing of the stairwell could be secured through a condition.
52. During my site visit I observed the remains of softwood panelling in the front two ground floor rooms. This had been augmented, in places, by new softwood panelling. Given the presence of panelling in what would have been two rooms

of considerable status, flanking the hall, it is likely that the front range ground floor was panelled throughout. The reinstatement of such panelling would, therefore, be an appropriate feature to reinstate, using, wherever possible, the historic fabric which remains.

53. Moving on to Room 3 the appellant has inserted a pair of new oak posts in the middle of the room, as shown on the proposal plans. There is no indication within the DAHS of the historic layout of this room prior to around 1961. The introduction of the two oak posts is a solution to support a new oak beam. Whilst the appellant initially consulted a structural engineer who has confirmed that such an intervention would present no risk to the structure, no detailed structural engineering report accompanied the application. In the absence of such a report I am unable to ascertain the full implications of the works on the building or its historic fabric, nor has it been demonstrated that the presence of such supporting members would create a layout that is anything other than conjectural. A similar post has been inserted towards the rear of the building. This suffers from similar lack of evidential support. Given that listed buildings are a rare and finite resource, the unjustified introduction of these structural members would be harmful to the historic layout of the LB.
54. The works would create a new opening between Room 3 and the proposed pantry. This would result in the loss of historic fabric. There is no evidence before me to suggest that such an opening existed previously and so such loss, which is inherently harmful, is unjustified. The pantry would be formed from a space associated with Room 4 and thus the historic circulation of the LB would be altered.
55. The plans showing the works indicate the formation of a fireplace adjacent to the new opening. However, there is no information provided within the DAHS to indicate that such a feature has existed in that location previously. In the absence of such justification such works would, at best, provide a conjectural layout to the room. On the basis of the evidence before me it has not been demonstrated that such a feature in this location would be an appropriate addition.
56. The works would introduce a window seat associated with opening SE10. At the time of my visit there was nothing to suggest that such a feature was present at any time during the building's history. Such provision would therefore only create a conjectural feature within the building. On the basis of the evidence before me I cannot be certain that such a feature in this location would be an appropriate addition.
57. Similarly, I saw no indication that Room 3, or any of the rear range was previously panelled. Given the status of the room as a former taproom/kitchen it would be unlikely that such a feature would have been present historically, and no evidence has been provided to support its presence. I therefore consider that provision of panelling beyond the historic front range of the LB would have been unlikely and its fitting now, inauthentic.
58. The appellant has removed an existing staircase and its associated partitioning and brickwork in Room 3. These, however, were later additions and no historic fabric has been lost. Their removal seeks to return the space within Room 3 to a layout more reflective of its earlier proportions. This would, therefore, provide a modest benefit in understanding the historic circulation of the building.

59. Within Room 4 the works have removed a ground floor bathroom, which was a modern, 20th century addition. Thus, no historic fabric has been lost by its removal.
60. Two windows would be blocked up, identified as NW7 and NW8. They would be infilled with stone to match the existing walling. NW7 is a modern window dating from the late 20th Century, set in an historic quoined opening. However, NW8 is a heavy framed casement with a metal sash. Its design is incongruous with other windows within the LB, lacking quoins and being of a sash material not seen elsewhere on the building.
61. Given that the NW7 is a modern frame and that when infilled the stonework would be set back from the existing stonework, the works would not result in the loss of historic fabric whilst referencing the historic layout of the fenestration. However, given the incongruity of design of NW8 its loss, and reinstatement as plain wall would be likely to return the wall to an earlier fenestration pattern. The infill should, therefore, be flush, whereas a set back as proposed is inappropriate and harmful.
62. Whilst details for works to NW7 could be governed by a suitably-worded condition, which would not fundamentally alter the works, the works shown on NW8 incorporate a setback and this could not be controlled through the use of a condition to achieve a satisfactory solution without fundamentally altering their proposed scope.
63. The proposed removal of a window, identified as SE8, and enlarging of its opening to provide a door has already been undertaken. The provision of a door at this location has removed historic material and has, therefore, resulted in harm to the LB.
64. The appellant has opened up an infilled fireplace within Room 4 in preparation for the installation of a biomass boiler. The appellant has indicated that opening the fireplace only involved the removal of modern brick infill and making good. Thus, no historic material has been lost in the opening up of the fireplace. The work has reinstated a former fireplace, and this is a benefit in revealing the former internal layout of the LB. The provision of the biomass boiler and arrangements for its discharge of fumes could be controlled through an appropriately worded condition.
65. In room 4 stud partitions have been introduced, together with a new stair. The new stair fundamentally alters the historic circulation within the building. The DAHS provides no reasoning or justification for the works and I find that, in the absence of such the changes would be an inauthentic alteration to the LB, undermining its historic circulation without justification.
66. Moving onto the first floor, in Room 5 the works have reopened part of the former doorway that gave onto a now demolished two storey rear extension that provided bathrooms for guest bedrooms and fitted a new window. The material removed exhibited scarring from previous works and was later, modern work. The detailing around the opening, as with the new opening directly below, reflects that around other openings on the elevations to the rear of the building, with stone quoins. As such, minimal historic fabric is removed from the LB, whilst reopening an historic opening. However, the window would be fitted with slimline double glazing units, which I have, for the reasons set out above, identified as being harmful to the special interest of the LB.

67. Within Rooms 5, 6, 7 and 8 there would be alterations to internal partitions to allow the fitting of doors. I am satisfied that, as no historic fabric would be removed and the detailing of the doors could be controlled through a suitably worded condition, no harm would result to the special interest of the LB through the installation of these partitions.
68. During my site visit I observed that areas of historic softwood panelling remained in rooms 5 and 6. Room 6 also featured a historic window seat and shutters were fitted to the windows. I saw no marks indicating the previous fitting of shutters to window NE5. Given the historic status of these rooms I consider it likely that panelling was fitted throughout these rooms on the front range of the LB. By reinstating panelling throughout the front range of the LB the works would follow the former status of these rooms. Detailing of such panelling could be controlled through the use of a suitably worded condition. However, there is no evidence before me of panelling in the rear range. Such provision would appear unlikely as the rooms would have had a lower status in the hierarchy of accommodation within the building.
69. The works reinstate a fireplace in Room 5. Whilst it is likely that this fireplace would have been open, historically, no detail has been provided regarding the scope of the works. In these circumstances I cannot be certain that the works would be appropriate and that they would not harm the special interest of the LB, even were I to require the submission of details at a later date.
70. In Room 6 a doorway has been knocked through at the location of a former cupboard. This cupboard was formed by blocking up a window on the rear face of the front range when the LB was extended to the rear by the addition of an upper floor to the existing rear range. This cupboard provided evidence of the alteration of the building over time to reflect the changing needs of the business. Its alteration to the extent carried out has resulted in harm, both in this regard and through the loss of historic fabric of the building, both within the infilled aperture and below by enlarging the opening to a significant degree.
71. Moving on to Room 7, the works remove a modern stair and partitioning. As will be seen above, I have found that their removal is seen as a modest benefit in understanding the historic circulation of the building.
72. Within Rooms 7 and 8 new studwork walls have been introduced, subdividing the space. The head of the new stair from the ground floor has been accommodated in the northwest corner, within Room 8. Whilst I have found harm to the LB through the provision of the new stair, the studwork partitions are lightweight new additions that do not entail the loss of historic fabric. I therefore find that no harm would result in their introduction and the furnishing of the rooms created for bathrooms and other functional rooms providing for the occupiers.
73. The staircase from the first floor to the second has been replaced. The appellant has provided a condition report containing recommendations prepared by Barford Joinery. This describes the overall condition of the stair as very poor, having undergone fire damage, multiple repairs without regard to its historic fabric and attack by beetles, such that the stair was no longer fit for purpose. The report identifies that no material is salvageable for reuse to reconstruct the staircase.

74. On the basis of the evidence before me the repair of the staircase between the ground and first floor is impractical and the replacement of the staircase in some form is necessary to provide a safe means of access to the second floor. The report identifies that the former location led to conflict between the access point and the roof slope and that the stairs were steeper than necessary. This would have implications for the safety of users. However, whilst in the same approximate location, the replacement stairs are not in their historic position nor do they conform to their historic configuration. There has thus been a degree of harm to the historic circulation of the building and the character of the stairwell, resulting in harm to the special interest of the LB. Nonetheless it is clear from the report that works are necessary to provide a safe means of access to the upper floors. The floor through which the stair ascends was replaced after 1961 and is not, therefore, historic fabric.
75. During my site visit I observed the presence of remaining shutters at several windows. It is likely that shutters were present in all of the historic windows to provide security and privacy. Their reinstatement at any windows now lacking would reinstate authentic features to the LB. Such provision could be controlled through an appropriately worded condition.
76. The appellant argues that there is no reference in the building listing description to internal features. However, listings are primarily for identification purposes and do not provide an exhaustive or complete description of the special interest.
77. The appellant also argues that the provision of details, such as work schedules and additional drawings have not been provided for works to other listed buildings within Wansford. However, as will be seen above, I have found that there is a severe lack of clarity associated with the works, and in the absence of sufficient detail, I have in several instances found harm to the LB. I have no details of other sites referred to by the appellant. This notwithstanding, heritage assets are a finite resource of national importance which planning policy and guidance seeks to preserve. I have determined this appeal based on the evidence before me, which, in many places is insufficient and I am unable to rule out harm as a consequence. In any case works to other heritage assets do not justify further works that would be harmful to either the LB or the CA.
78. The appellant argues that the works are the implementation of proposals discussed with the Council prior to the submission of applications for listed building consent. However, such discussions are not binding, either on the Council or on myself, and I have determined this appeal on the merits of the works before me.
79. The LB is a prominent building in the street scene, close to the carriageway and the windows can be clearly observed from the street in passing, thus contributing to the street scene and, thereby, the appearance of the CA. I have identified, above, that the traditional features of the buildings make an important contribution to the appearance of the CA and that fenestration of traditional design is retained on some of the buildings within the CA. I have further identified that the glazing of windows with slimline double glazing would harm the features of special interest of the LB.
80. The use of double glazing, even slimline units, is not a traditional design response and leads to windows of a more limited lifespan that cause greater

visual disruption from the higher reflectivity of the glass that is used. This harms both the building and the CA.

81. Whilst the windows on rear and side-facing elevations would be concealed from public view, and restricted in private views, the front windows would nonetheless be visible in the street scene and the windows are a prominent feature on the front façade of the LB. They would, thus, be capable of harming both the wider character and appearance of the CA and thereby harm its significance. The double glazing of windows on the front façade would fail to take the opportunity to enhance the CA by installing windows of a more authentic traditional design.
82. The proposal, by reducing the ground level, has reduced the risk of damp ingress within the LB, and the appellant has identified that such damp has been a problem in the past. However, no damp report has been submitted with the appeal to identify the extent or pinpoint the cause or causes of this problem. Dampness within the building may cause deterioration of the historic fabric and its treatment would help to preserve the building to the public benefit. However, as I cannot be certain of the cause or the extent of the problem I give this limited weight.
83. The LB is currently in a state of dilapidation, and this makes a negative contribution to the appearance of the CA. I have identified above that renovation of the frontage would enhance the appearance of the CA. However, the introduction of slimline double glazing would be harmful to its appearance. Whilst other works would act to enhance it, such as repointing the stone and the renewing dilapidated and inappropriate rainwater goods, these benefits can, as I have identified above, be provided independently of the reglazing works. Thus, the reglazing would harm the appearance of the CA overall.
84. The proposal would reinstate historic openings within the LB and remove later, modern additions, making the historic circulation of parts of the building more legible. However, other openings would be formed that have no justification and are harmful to the special features of the LB. On balance, the changes to the legibility of the historic circulation of the building are harmful despite some benefits being present.
85. Given the above, I find that, when considered overall, the internal works and works to the openings have failed to preserve the special interest of the listed building and the significance of the CA. This harm would not be outweighed by the beneficial elements of the proposed changes to these buildings and overall harm would result to which I attach considerable importance and weight.

Heritage Balance

86. Paragraph 205 of the Framework advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation. Paragraph 206 goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of those assets or from development within their setting. It makes clear that any such harm should have a clear and convincing justification.
87. Given the scope of the works, I find the harm to be less than substantial in this instance but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight. Where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of

designated heritage assets, paragraph 208 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimal viable use.

88. Notwithstanding the heritage benefits that I have already considered, the appellant is of the opinion that the proposal would be beneficial because it would bring the property back into a viable use as a single family dwelling house. The government has stated its aim to significantly improve the supply of dwellings. However, the building is currently used as a dwelling and following the works there would be no overall increase in the supply of dwellings. I therefore give limited weight to this benefit.
89. However, paragraph 203 of the Framework identifies the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. The use of the entirety of the LB would be a public benefit that attracts significant weight in my deliberations because it optimises the use of the building.
90. However, I do not find that the public benefits identified by the appellant are sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified in this instance.
91. Given the above I conclude that, on balance, the harmful effects of the proposal would fail to preserve the special historic interest of the Grade II listed building and that the character or appearance of the Wansford Conservation Area would be neither conserved nor enhanced.
92. Policy LP34 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019) places great weight and importance on the conservation of heritage assets and their settings. The policy seeks to protect the significance of designated heritage assets by protecting and enhancing architectural and historic character and ensure that proposals do not harm or detract from the significance of the heritage asset or any special features that contribute to its special architectural or historic interest and that its special character and qualities are conserved and enhanced. The policy further seeks to ensure that proposals respect the historic form, fabric and special interest that contributes to the significance of the affected heritage asset. In regard to proposals within conservation areas, the policy seeks to ensure they preserve, and wherever possible enhance, features that contribute positively to the area's character and appearance.
93. Thus, harmful elements of the proposed works would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and paragraph 206 of the Framework and be inconsistent with policies within the development plan, insofar as relevant.

Other Matters

94. The appellant has expressed dissatisfaction with the way the application has been dealt with by the Council. In particular, he considers that the Council have been more onerous in their requirements for information than should have been the case. This is a matter beyond the scope of this appeal and should be resolved between the two parties concerned.
95. The appellant has expressed a preference to work with the Enforcement Team in his future dealings with the Council, in preference to the Heritage Team. Whilst I note the appellant's concerns about the relationship between him and the Heritage Team, it is not for me to dictate how the Council delivers its services and this lies outside the scope of this appeal.

Conditions

96. The Council did not suggest any conditions in its evidence. However, I have imposed conditions that are necessary to control the delivery of the approved works so as to preserve the special interest of the LB and the character and appearance of the CA. The appellant and Council have had the opportunity to provide comments on these and I have taken their comments into account in my decision.
97. I have placed a condition on the consent requiring the commencement of works within three years. This is necessary to limit the lifespan of the consent and prevent the accumulation of unimplemented consents. Further, a number of conditions are necessary to ensure that those works that I have approved can be completed without unacceptable harm to the LB. I have, therefore, added conditions requiring the provision of details of those allowed works. The works for which details are required are: -
- The repointing of the front façade of the LB;
 - The replacement of the gutters, hoppers and downpipes on the front facade; and
 - The repair of render on dormer windows.

Conclusion

98. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to the repointing of the front façade of the LB; the retention of all gutters, hoppers and downpipes on the rear facades of the building; the replacement of all gutters, hoppers and downpipes on the front façade of the building; the retention of the garden gate; the retention of the works to the outhouse; the repair of cornices on the dormer windows identified; and the repair of render on dormer windows. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to all other works.

I A Dyer

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1) The works authorised by this consent Shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this consent.
- 2) No repointing works to the front elevation shall take place until details, including a schedule showing their extent on a plan of the front elevation at a scale design of 1:50 as well as a method statement which includes, but is not restricted to, cleaning of stonework and a specification for the mortar mix and repointing profile shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 3) No works to the front dormer windows shall take place until details of the render mix to be applied to the dormer windows have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 4) No gutters, hoppers or downpipes shall be installed on the front elevation until details including plans, elevations and sections at scale 1:20, to include details of fixings and finishes, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.