

Application reference numbers	2025/0697
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Application Types	Listed building consent
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Proposal Description:	Repairs to historic plasterwork, including new restraint pads within ceiling void to Grade I listed building (Listed Building Consent)
Location:	Northern College, Lowe Lane, Stainborough, Barnsley, S75 3ET

Applicant	Mr M Barrett
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Number of Third Party Reps	None	Parish:	Stainborough
		Ward:	Penistone East

SUMMARY

The proposal seeks listed building consent for repairs to historic plasterwork, including new restraint pads within the ceiling void.

The proposal relates to the Grade 1 Listed Wentworth Castle, which is within the Green Belt, a designated Conservation Area and a Historic Park and Garden.

The report demonstrates that any harm generated by the proposal is outweighed by other material planning considerations. The development would not cause an unacceptable level of harm to heritage assets and is recommended to be subject only to the standard time limit and plans conditions.

Recommendation: **GRANT Listed Building Consent**

Introduction

- The proposal is for listed building consent for repairs to historic plasterwork, including new restraint pads within ceiling void.
- The proposal relates to the Grade 1 Listed Wentworth Castle, and within the Green Belt, a designated Conservation Area and a Historic Park and Garden.

Site Description

The Grade 1 listed Wentworth Castle, also known as Northern College, subject of this listed building consent application is set within the grade 1 listed registered park and garden 'Wentworth Castle' where there are many other grade 2 and 2* listed buildings, and within the Conservation Area 'Wentworth Castle and Stainborough Park'.

Wentworth Castle is one of, if not the, finest country houses in the north of England with distinct architectural styles reflecting the visions of successive generations of the Earls of Stafford including the Baroque, Palladian and Country Garden.

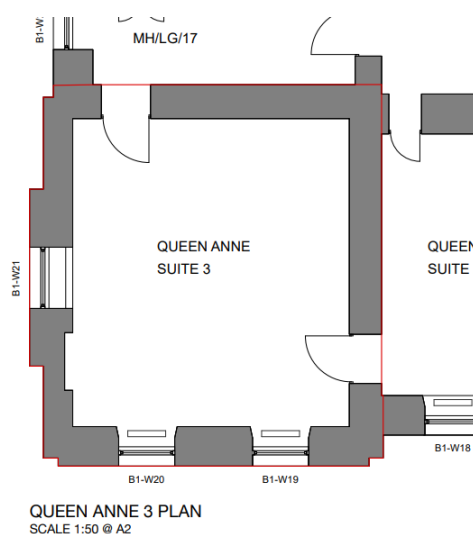
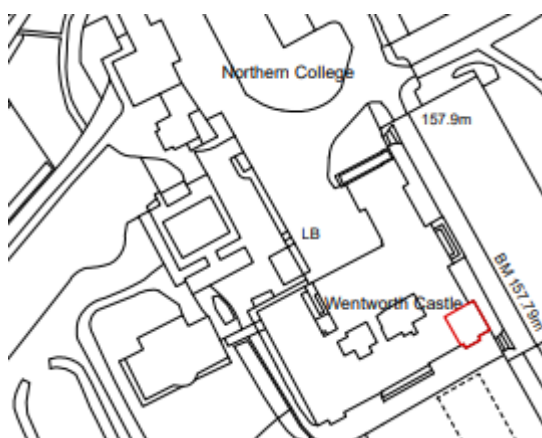
The application relates to works to the historic ceiling of the Queen Anne room (3) (QA3), below the Long Gallery. The QA3 room is in the part of the house most closely related with Thomas Wentworth (Baron Raby/1st Earl Strafford) who erected the Baroque wing and dedicated substantial elements of the design of the house and garden to Queen Anne. Owing to its high aesthetic, historic (associative) and communal values, the ceiling and room have exceptional heritage significance.

Proposal

The proposal seeks listed building consent for repairs to historic plasterwork, including new restraint pads within ceiling void.

The application is supported by a Heritage Impact Assessment and Plaster Ceiling Survey. The application has been subject to pre application advice which was supportive of the principle of the works.

The location of the proposed works





Mirrored Ceiling Plan

Relevant Site History

Application Reference	Application description	Status
2024/0524	Installation of secondary glazing (Listed Building Consent)	Granted.
A wide range of other applications relate to the wider Northern College		

Policy Context

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the current development plan policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise; the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making.

The statutory test in relation to listed buildings requires the decision maker to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses.

The Local Plan was adopted in January 2019 and is accompanied by seven masterplan frameworks which apply to the largest site allocations (housing, employment, and mixed-use sites). In addition, the Council has adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans which provide supporting guidance and specific local policies which are a material consideration in the decision-making process.

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting held 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering its objectives. This means no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review. The next review is due to take place in 2027, or earlier, if circumstances require it.

Local Plan

The following policies are considered to be relevant to this application:

Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making – Development is expected to be of a high quality design and will be expected to respect, take advantage of and reinforce the distinctive, local character and other features of Barnsley.

Policy HE1 The Historic Environment – indicates that we will positively encourage developments which will help in the management, conservation, understanding and enjoyment of Barnsley's historic environment and will support proposals which conserve and enhance the significance and setting of the borough's heritage assets.

Policy HE2 Heritage Statements and general application procedures – indicates the requirement to include a heritage statement with relevant applications.

Policy HE3 Developments affecting Historic Buildings – Proposals involving historic buildings should conserve and where appropriate enhance, respect historic precedents, and capitalise on opportunities to reveal significance.

Policy HE4 Developments affecting Historic Areas or Landscapes – Proposals that are within or likely to affect the setting and heritage significance of a Registered Park or Garden will be expected to respect the special interest and views of the area and its setting and take account of and respect important landscape elements.

NPPF

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. NPPF policy of relevance to this application includes:

Para 202 – Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance. These assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance

Paras 208 -212 – Provide guidance on identifying and assessing the particular significance of heritage assets; on taking account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets; and 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, irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Para 213 – Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to assets of the highest significance, including Grade I listed buildings, should be wholly exceptional.

Para 215 – Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Relevant Consultations:

Conservation- Multiple cracks are visible and due to concerns over failure of the plaster ceiling, the room and the section of the long gallery above are closed to minimise vibration and further damage. The submitted Plaster Ceiling Survey has revealed several defects in the ceiling and floor above it and concluded that the plaster ceiling is at risk of failure.

The proposed repair and the support method present a degree of risk. However, without support and repair the ceiling may fail either partially or globally and a repair could not then be implemented. The proposed method of support is essential to enable the plaster pad repair method and re-opening of the Queen Anne 3 room and the long gallery above. Given the clear issues identified with the ceiling and the risk of failure and loss (in doing nothing) it seems that the risk is justified. However comment from Historic England is essential to ensure they are informed of the risks and issues and agree with the method of both support and repair.

Historic England – Overall, Historic England supports the principle of repairing these highly significant ceilings. The proposal would result in a small amount (less than substantial) of harm caused by the proposed repair techniques, which should be weighed against the public benefits perceived to arise from the scheme. Historic England has no objection on heritage grounds but seeks clarification of some matters of detail.

Following discussion with the Conservation Officer and Architect, further comments were received, acknowledging the inherent risk with all options, including doing nothing, however the scheme in its current form will seek to repair the ceilings and provide a continued use for these specialist rooms. The works are necessary and the methodology seeks to reduce and mitigate the risks. Therefore Historic England has no objections to the proposals.

Stainborough Parish Council – No comments received

Ward Councillors – No comments received

Representations

A site notice was placed nearby and a press notice placed in a local newspaper.

No representations were received

Assessment

The main issues for consideration are as follows:

- The principle of the proposed works
- The impact on heritage assets
- The impact on highway safety

For the purposes of considering the balance in this application the following planning weight is referred to in this report using the following scale:

- Substantial
- Considerable
- Significant
- Moderate
- Modest
- Limited
- Little or no

Principle of the proposed works

The proposal involves internal works of repair to a ceiling. The proposal is acceptable in principle subject to assessment of the matters of detail below.

Impact on heritage assets

The proposal involves support and repairs to the historic ceiling of the Queen Anne (3) (QA3) room where there are multiple visible cracks. Due to the concerns over failure of the plaster ceiling, the room and a section of the long gallery above are closed to minimise vibration and further damage. The submitted Plaster Ceiling Survey has revealed several defects in the ceiling and floor above it and concluded that the plaster ceiling is at risk of failure

The QA3 room is in the part of the house most closely related with Thomas Wentworth (Baron Raby/1st Earl Strafford) who erected the Baroque wing and dedicated substantial elements of the design of the house and garden to Queen Anne. Owing to its high aesthetic, historic (associative) and communal values, the ceiling and room have exceptional heritage significance.

Consultation responses from the Council's Conservation and Design Officer and Historic England make it clear that there are inherent risks both with doing nothing and with the proposed method of support and repair of the ceiling and the historic plasterwork. The scheme as proposed seeks to repair the ceilings and provide a continued use for these specialist rooms and the advice concludes that the works are necessary and the methodology seeks to reduce and mitigate the risks inherent in the proposed works.

Reflecting the advice of the Conservation and Design Officer, it is considered that the proposed works are fully justified. The proposal will result in a small amount (less than substantial) of harm caused by the proposed repair techniques, which are justified by the public benefits that arise from the scheme, including repair of a ceiling and room of exceptional heritage significance and re-opening of the Queen Anne (3) room and the long gallery above it.

It is considered that the proposal is acceptable and in compliance with national and local policy regarding heritage assets and moderate weight in favour of the proposal is attached to this material consideration.

PLANNING BALANCE & CONCLUSION

Overall, the proposed works are considered to be acceptable. Consultees have either not commented or have supported the proposal. Moderate weight in favour of the proposal attaches to the heritage aspects of the proposal. Having balanced all the material planning considerations, the proposal is considered to be in compliance with the development plan as a whole. It is also concluded that the proposal will cause less than substantial harm to the Queen Anne (3) room but that this is justified by the public benefits that arise from the scheme. The proposal is therefore recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

The above objections, consideration and resulting recommendation have had regard to Article 8 and Article 1 of the First Protocol of the European Convention for Human Rights Act 1998. The recommendation will not interfere with the applicant's right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.