

Application reference number	2025/0995
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Application Type	Listed building consent
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Proposal Description:	Urgent Stabilisation works to the ceilings of the Long Gallery and Italian Stair (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 urgent stabilisation works to the ceilings of the long Gallery and the Italian Stair

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 urgent stabilisation works to the ceilings of the Long Gallery and Italian Stair. The proposal relates to internal works 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 Grade 1 listing denotes the buildings exceptional special interest and national significance.

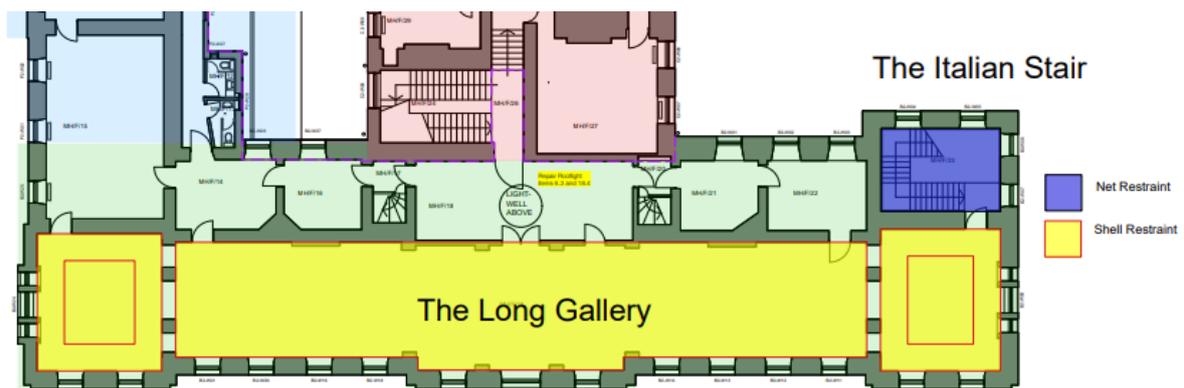
The application relates to works to the Long Gallery and Italian Stair rooms which are of exceptional significance owing to their evidential, aesthetic and associated historic values.

Proposal

The proposal seeks listed building consent for urgent stabilisation works to the ceilings of the Long Gallery and Italian Stair rooms.

The application is supported by a Heritage Impact Assessment and Plaster Ceiling Survey. The application has been subject to a pre application meeting to discuss repair options for the ceilings.

The location of the proposed works



Relevant Site History

Application Reference	Application description	Status
2025/0697	Repairs to historic plasterwork, including new restraint pads within ceiling void to Grade I listed building (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 - No objection

Historic England – No objection

Stainborough Parish Council – No comments received

Ward Councillors – No comments received

Representations

Notification letters were sent to 12 neighbours, a site notice was placed nearby and a press notice placed in a local newspaper giving a final date for comments of 19 December.

No representations were received

Assessment

The main issues for consideration are as follows:

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

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 ceilings. The proposal is acceptable in principle subject to assessment of the matters of detail below.

Impact on heritage assets

The proposal relates to the repair to ceilings, large parts of which are cracking/failing due to the historic laths being close together. In addition parts of the ceiling have already been replaced/repared using plasterboard and the seams between these panels are visible from below which detracts from the aesthetic values of the ceiling.

Historic England have advised that the justification for these works is that the historic plaster is constructed using laths which are too close together which is posing a risk of plaster failure and consequently harm to more significant fabric below as well as to people in the room. The proposal seeks to replicate what is quite a simple ceiling by battening off by around 30mm and introducing a fibrous plaster ceiling beneath. The proposal would preserve the historic fabric in situ, allowing for the potential that a more permanent solution could be found for this historic fabric in the future. The proposal demonstrates that there is a very low risk of causing condensation and moisture build up issues. Given the complications surrounding the repair of the historic plaster in situ the proposal is considered to be justified in terms of the need for the work and would allow future custodians to address the historic fabric directly should new techniques be developed.

The Council's Conservation Officer concurs with the views of Historic England, noting also that survey and investigation indicates that the nibs are either minimal in number of missing, and bonding of the ceiling appears lacking. This allied to damage from water ingress and beetle infestation risks the ceilings becoming detached and failing either locally or globally. As a result the rooms have been closed for safety. The Historic Impact Assessment sets a sequential approach to the proposed repair. The condition of the ceilings is such that failure is a risk, and that failure would cause substantial harm, including to decorative features of exceptional significance in the rooms below. While there is some minor harm to the fabric by drilling and the insertion of fixings into historic plasterwork and ceiling bearers above, it is considered that this is small scale and reversible and justified when balanced against the prospect of catastrophic loss. Further, the installation of the net in the Italian Stair safeguards this ceiling which minimal intervention, is reversible and allows this space to be brought back into use.

Overall the proposal would cause a small amount of harm to the significance of the building. It would also help to secure the historic fabric whilst regularizing the appearance of the ceiling when viewed from below and allow the rooms to be opened up to public use (as they are currently closed for safety reasons) which are all public benefits of the proposal.

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. It has already been concluded above that the public benefits of the works outweigh any harm to the listed building. Since there are no other material planning considerations it follows that the planning balance weighs in favour of granting listed building consent. The proposal is therefore recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

01. The works authorised by this consent shall begin no later than three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: In order to comply with the provision of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

02. The works authorised by this consent shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the plans (Nos.) and specifications as approved unless required by any other conditions in this consent.

Excel Plaster Detail

Existing Basement Floor Plan drawing number 23-023N-010

Existing Lower Ground Floor Plan drawing number 23-023N-011

Existing Upper Ground Floor Plan drawing number 23-023N-012

Existing First Floor Plan drawing number 23-023N-013

Existing Second Floor Plan drawing number 23-023N-014

Existing Attic Floor Plan drawing number 23-023N-015

Existing Roof Plan drawing number 23-023N-016

Plaster Ceiling Survey Hirst Conservation 2 August 2024

Repair of Long Gallery Ceiling Options Appraisal and Method Statement

Heritage Impact Statement

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and in accordance with Local Plan Policies D1 High Quality Design and Place Making and HE3 Developments affecting Historic Buildings.

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.