

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	251022
Site Address:	Castlemans Cottage, Bath Road, Hare Hatch, Wokingham, RG10 9UT
Expiry Date:	18 July 2025 (EOT)
Advert Publication Date:	6 May 2025
Site Notice Date:	12 May 2025
Site Visit Date:	12 May 2025
Proposal: Application for Listed Building consent for the proposed repair works to the main roof. (part-retrospective)	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- Listed building
- Bat roost suitability

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	TB23 – Biodiversity and Development TB24 – Designated Heritage Assets (where site is within a Conservation Area)

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
No relevant planning history		

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

WBC Conservation	No objection
WBC Ecology	No objection subject to conditions

REPRESENTATIONS

None received

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

Castleman's Cottage forms part of the wing of the grade II Listed 'Castlemans' country house which was listed on 26 January 1967. 'Castlemans' is a mid C18 property altered in C19 and C20. The wing attached to 'Castlemans' has since been

divided into two cottages, one of which being the application site 'Castleman's Cottage' and the other one being 'Pandora'.

Proposal Description:

This application seeks part-retrospective approval for the proposed repair works to the roof of Castleman's Cottage, which comprise re-covering of the roof with the existing tiles and valleys where possible and replacement of those elements which are no longer useable with materials similar in appearance to the existing. It was also proposed to instal new breathable felt, however, this has since been removed due to ecological constraints. Other works involve installation of new battens where the existing ones have perished, replacement of structurally compromised timber, strengthening members, installation of new wall plates, as well as new timber boards to form the central gulley, as well as re-lining the gulley and other minor works. At the time of application submission, clay tile roof covering has already been removed.

The proposal complies in terms of:

Impact on heritage asset:



Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ("the Act") states that "*in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works 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.*"

The application is accompanied by a set of drawings submitted following the on-site meeting with the Heritage Consultant, Structural Engineer and WBC Built Heritage Officer. These outline the approaches to the repair works as discussed in the meeting, which the WBC Built Heritage Officer considers acceptable. The existing materials would be re-used and where not possible, materials similar in appearance would be used. As such it is considered that the proposed works would not have unacceptable impact on the Listed Building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses. The works are therefore considered to be acceptable and accord with the statutory duty set out in Section 16(2) of the Act.

Impact on bats:



Bats and their roosts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (the Regulations) lists all species of bats as being European Protected Species of animals. It is an offence, subject to exceptions, to, amongst other things, kill or disturb animals listed in Schedule 2; this includes a single bat, not just a population of a species.

Whilst there is no express mention of protected species within Section 16 of the Act, where a Listed Building Consent is granted, this could result in a contravention of the law. As such, it is necessary to assess the impacts of the proposal on the protected species.

The application is accompanied by the Preliminary Roost Assessment ("PRA"), which contains the results of site inspection undertaken in April 2025, following the stripping

of the roof of tiles in the building subject to this application (B1). As such, the current state of the building offers no suitable bat roost features. Given that it is no longer possible to assess the roof's condition prior to the tile removal for suitability for bat roosts, it is necessary to adopt a precautionary approach to ensure that the potential impacts on bats are appropriately mitigated. This requires an assumption that a roost of significant conservation value was lost.

The PRA contains a range of avoidance and compensatory measures within sections 4.2.2 to 4.2.5, which have been considered by the WBC Ecologist and are considered acceptable. These are proposed to be secured by Condition (Condition 3 refers). However, the incorporation of breathable felt is not acceptable due to the risk to bats. Following discussions with the Applicant, it has now been confirmed that only bitumen Type 1F would be used. This is reflected in the wording of Condition 2 (Approved Plans).

The PRA outlines that there remains a potential risk of disturbance to any bats that may be roosting within the adjoining building B2, which has not been inspected internally to assess whether bats are present. As such, the WBC Ecologist recommended that works must proceed under a Method Statement designed to minimise any potential disturbance to bats and which would need to contain provision for enhancing roosting opportunities for both crevice- and void-dwelling bat species. The re-commencement of works must be undertaken under the supervision of an appropriately qualified Ecologist Bat Licence holder and works will need to follow the method statement agreed with the Ecologist Bat Licence holder. This is proposed to be secured by Condition (Condition 3 refers). Where the pre-commencement checks identifies that the proposed works would result in impacts not previously addressed, then an updated Method Statement will be required to be produced and submitted to the LPA for approval (Condition 4 refers).

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010):

In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that persons with protected characteristics as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

RECOMMENDATION

Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Grant consent
Date:	17 July 2025
Earliest date for decision:	6 June 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	<i>BJC</i>
Date:	17.07.25