



<b>Planning Committee Date Report to</b>	11 October 2023 South Cambridgeshire District Council Planning Committee
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development
<b>Reference</b>	23/00329/LBC
<b>Site</b>	TWI, Granta Park
<b>Ward / Parish</b>	Great Abington
<b>Proposal</b>	Creation of a 4 m opening to the curtilage listed wall to enable the creation of an east-west shared access which forms part of the outline application 22/05549/OUT, together with the general repair of copings and masonry to the wall.
<b>Applicant</b>	TWI Limited
<b>Presenting Officer</b>	Michael Hammond
<b>Reason Reported to Committee</b>	Linked to application 22/05549/OUT
<b>Member Site Visit Date</b>	N/A
<b>Key Issues</b>	Heritage assets
<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>APPROVE</b>

## 1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The application seeks the creation of a 4 m opening to the curtilage listed wall to enable the creation of an east-west shared access which forms part of the outline application 22/05549/OUT, together with the general repair of copings and masonry to the wall.
- 1.2 The Conservation Officer has no objections to the application and considers that the development would maintain the character and appearance of the listed building and its setting.
- 1.3 Officers recommend that the Planning Committee approves the application subject to conditions.

## 2.0 Site Description and Context

- 2.1 The site is the TWI site on Granta Park. To the east of the site lies the Grade II\* Listed Abington Hall. The wall forms part of the original curtilage to this Grade II\* listed building. The wall is situated adjacent to the gardeners cottage which is also curtilage listed. This wall and the gardeners cottage are situated within the centre of a cluster of recent buildings which has fragmented the visual relationship between the listed building and these curtilage listed structures.

## 3.0 The Proposal

- 3.1 The application seeks the creation of a 4 m opening to the curtilage listed wall to enable the creation of an east-west shared access which forms part of the outline application 22/05549/OUT, together with the general repair of copings and masonry to the wall.

## 4.0 Relevant Site History

4.1

Reference	Description	Outcome
22/05549/OUT	Outline application for the development of the TWI campus (including means of access) for use by TWI (comprising but not limited to a range of related uses including office and laboratory space, and ancillary facilities including conferencing and non-residential education/training uses) and/or for Research and Development purposes (Use Class E(g)(ii)), following the erection of two new buildings centred off the	Parallel application

central service spine (B4 and B5), one building (B6) immediately to the north, and an extension to the existing engineering hall (B3) (with a combined floor area up to 31,500m<sup>2</sup> (GEA) excluding plant), the reconfiguration and external works to the Bevan Braithwaite building, central service spine and the servicing yard, and the provision of a decked car park to the north, surface car parking and cycle parking, landscaping and associated infrastructure (following the phased demolition of a number of buildings, namely BBH, Robert Jenkins, Resonance Shed and Trevor Gooch comprising 10,185m<sup>2</sup> (GEA)) with all other matters, namely layout, scale, appearance and landscaping reserved.

## **5.0 Policy**

### **5.1 National**

National Planning Policy Framework 2023  
National Planning Practice Guidance  
National Design Guide 2021  
Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

### **5.2 South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018**

NH/14 Heritage Assets

### **5.3 Supplementary Planning Documents**

The following SPDs were adopted to provide guidance to support previously adopted Development Plan Documents that have now been superseded by the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018. These documents are still material considerations when making planning decisions, with the weight in decision making to be determined on a case-by-case basis:

Listed Buildings SPD – Adopted 2009

## **6.0 Consultations**

- 6.1 **Great Abington Parish Council** – The Parish Council recommended the application be refused.
- 6.2 The Council noted that a considerable part of this listed wall had been knocked down during the construction of the Robert Jenkins building and the council felt that no further changes should be made to the listed wall, apart from repair and maintenance. The applicant should find an alternative access without interfering with the wall.
- 6.3 **Conservation Officer** – No objection.
- 6.4 The works would result in a degree harm to the curtilage listed structure due to loss of fabric, but this would be relatively low. The harm should be viewed in the context of numerous previous alterations. The surviving section of wall is only a fragment of the original structure. The creation of a new opening, with additional structural piers over concrete foundations, would allow for improvements to immediate setting which can be considered an enhancement. It is hoped that displaced bricks can be salvaged and re-used on site. There is a mention of the installation of interpretation boards near the wall to inform visitors of its context and history. This is also to be welcomed, subject to detail.
- 6.5 The proposals do not currently include wider repair works to the wall and cottage, other than a general description in the heritage statement. Both are in a poor condition with a range of inappropriate modern alterations which would benefit from remedial work. The structural report makes recommendations for works to ensure the future stability and viability of both structures which are not carried through into the proposals.
- 6.6 It will be important to ensure appropriate repairs are implemented as part of the project, both to ensure the longevity of the structures, and to capture the public / heritage benefits for the wider site redevelopment.
- 6.7 It is considered that the proposal would not adversely affect the setting and significance of the listed building for the reasons set out above.
- 6.8 In respect of NPPF paragraphs 199-202, it is considered the proposal would result in a modest amount of harm to the designated heritage asset. The harm has the potential to be outweighed by wider enhancements and repair works.
- 6.9 The proposals would meet the requirements of Local Plan policy NH/14.
- 6.10 **Historic England** - We suggest that you seek the views of your specialist conservation and archaeological advisers.
- 6.11 **Tree Officer** - No objection.
- 6.12 **Local Highway Authority** – No objection.
- 7.0 Third Party Representations**

7.1 2no. representations in objection have been received. These raise the following issues:

- Abington Hall is listed Grade II\*, so is in the top 8% of listed buildings in the country. Its setting extends to the whole of its park and to the Churches which adjoin the former parkland.
- The curtilage listed walled garden is to be reduced, as a substantial length of curtilage listed wall proposed to be demolished to provide a service access and turning area. This would remove the historic section of wall that provided the original corner of the walled garden and is of greater significance because it showed how long the garden was, and provided buttressing to the remainder of the wall. As the wall is listed, its removal does not comply with the 1990 (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act to protect the listed building. Demolition also does not comply with the NPPG to allow the interest to be revealed.
- The buildings being removed to open up the wall to view from the private perimeter roadway appear to be part of the list of buildings that were supposed to already have been removed under the Outline consent and its S106, and therefore should not be counted twice as benefit to outweigh harm.
- The original S106 should be enforced.
- The repairs and future of the extant curtilage listed wall and Gardeners Cottage are not secured within the details provided and the remains of the wall would remain vulnerable next to the proposed service access and turning area.
- Objections to concurrent outline application repeated.

## **8.0 Assessment**

### **Heritage Assets**

- 8.1 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that a local authority shall have regard to the desirability of preserving features of special architectural or historic interest, and in particular, Listed Buildings.
- 8.2 Para. 199 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. Any harm to, or loss of, the significant of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.
- 8.3 Policy NH/14 of the Local Plan requires development affecting heritage assets to sustain or enhance the character and distinctiveness of those assets. Policy HQ/1 states that all new development must be compatible with its location in terms of scale, density, mass, form, siting, design, proportion, material, texture and colour in relation to the surrounding area.

- 8.4 The application relates to a section of red brick wall which is a remnant of the 18th - century kitchen garden of Abington Hall. Connected to the wall is the former gardener's cottage, which dates to the 19th century with later alterations. Both are curtilage listed and are considered by the Conservation officer to be of moderate-low significance in relation to the main grade II\* listed hall.
- 8.5 It is proposed to create an opening of approximately 4m through the wall for vehicular access, which in turn would facilitate a wider redevelopment of the site. New vehicular access through the wall would be accompanied by new landscaping proposals and replacement of the adjacent buildings.
- 8.6 The application is supported by a Heritage Statement. The main significance of the heritage asset is its historic fabric and setting to the Grade II\* Listed Abington Hall.
- 8.7 The Conservation Officer is of the opinion that the proposal would not adversely affect the setting and significance of the listed building. This is because the minimal loss of fabric should be viewed in the context of numerous previous alterations and the surviving section of wall is only a fragment of the original structure. The creation of a new opening, with additional structural piers over concrete foundations, would allow for improvements to immediate setting which can be considered an enhancement.
- 8.8 It is considered that the physical removal of part of the wall would only result in a very low amount of less than substantial harm to the designated heritage asset which is balanced by the enhancement offered by the structural piers proposed. As part of the design for the 2023 outline masterplan there will be a new 'kitchen' walled garden being reinstated to the west side under the outline scheme, reinstating a feature akin to what it would have once been.
- 8.9 Subject to conditions, the proposal would not adversely impact the setting and significance of the listed building and complies with the provisions of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990, the NPPF and Local Plan policy NH/14.

### **Third Party Representations**

- 8.10 The point about the lack of information regarding repairs of the cottage and curtilage listed wall are noted but this will need to be addressed through a separate listed building consent application that follows the guidance set out in Condition 5 of this report.
- 8.11 The point concerning the enforcement of the original S106 is an enforcement matter and is not a reason to postpone the determination of this listed building application.
- 8.12 The removal of the buildings is not identified as a public benefit in the assessment of this listed building application.

## **Planning Balance**

- 8.13 Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38[6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 8.14 The Conservation Officer has no objections to the application and considers that the development would maintain the setting and significance of the listed building.
- 8.15 Officers recommend that the Planning Committee approves the application.
- 8.16 Having taken into account the provisions of the development plan, NPPF and NPPG guidance, the statutory requirements of section 66(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders, as well as all other material planning considerations, the proposed development is recommended for approval.

## **9.0 Recommendation**

### **9.1 Approve subject to:**

The planning conditions as set out below with minor amendments to the conditions as drafted delegated to officers.

1. The works hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this consent.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans as listed on this decision notice.

Reason: In the interests of good planning, for the avoidance of doubt and to facilitate any future application to the Local Planning Authority under Section 19 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

3. No works shall commence until details of how the listed building is to be properly protected and supported (following the carrying out of suitable investigative enabling works to allow full details to be prepared) during the carrying out of the works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved means of protection and support shall be implemented without damage to the fabric of the building and its windows and shall remain in place until the works are completed

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building in accordance with policy NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

4. Where historic bricks are to be removed as part of the demolition works, bricks capable of reuse shall be carefully salvaged and stored safely for future repair works. No such works shall commence until details of the means of storage or other disposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To ensure the reuse of historic materials wherever possible in accordance with Policy NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

5. The listed building shall be fully recorded before and during works by means of drawings, photographs and written report to Level 2 as set out in Historic England's Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice 2016. Copies of the final, completed report shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and the County Records Office within one year of the completion of works.

Reason: To ensure that this listed building is properly recorded both before and during works in accordance with Policy NH/13 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

6. No work shall commence until details of the following items have been submitted for the prior, written approval of the Local Planning Authority: (a) details of interpretation boards; (b) details and samples of new bricks and copings; (c) details of brick bond and pointing. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To avoid harm to the special interest of the listed building in accordance with policy NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

#### Background Papers:

The following list contains links to the documents on the Council's website and / or an indication as to where hard copies can be inspected.

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018
- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework SPDs