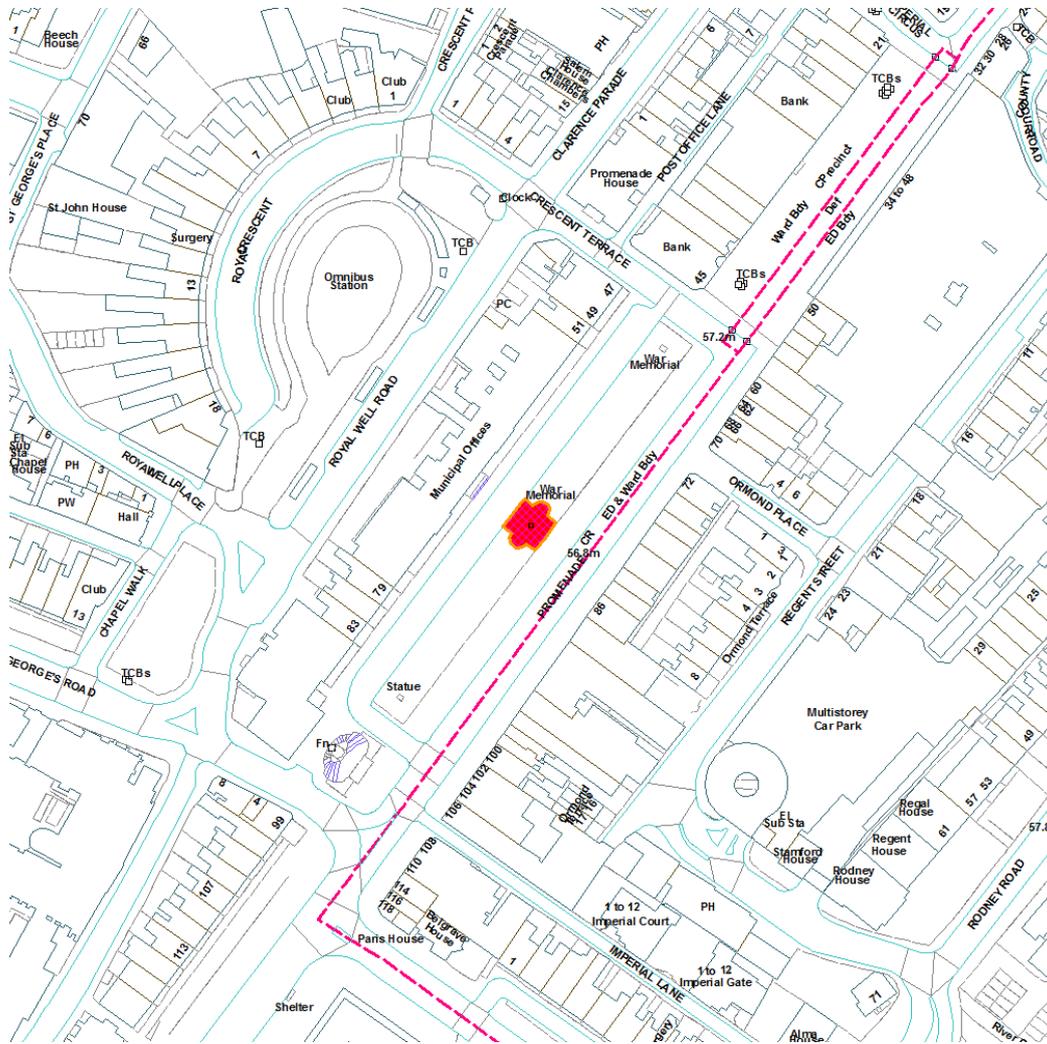


APPLICATION NO: 15/01604/LBC	OFFICER: Miss Michelle Payne
DATE REGISTERED: 12th September 2015	DATE OF EXPIRY: 7th November 2015
WARD: Lansdown	PARISH: N/A
APPLICANT:	Cheltenham Borough Council
AGENT:	Ogders Conservation Consultants
LOCATION:	Cenotaph, Promenade, Cheltenham
PROPOSAL:	Conservation of the war memorial to include cleaning of the stonework, carrying out repairs to decayed and fractured stone, repointing, re-cutting and re-filling deteriorated letters, and incising 8no. new names to match original style

RECOMMENDATION: Grant subject to ratification by National Planning Casework Unit



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1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND PROPOSAL

- 1.1 This is an application for listed building consent for works to the War Memorial on the Promenade in front of the Municipal Offices.
- 1.2 The cenotaph is Cheltenham's memorial to the fallen of the First World War, and is set within a paved precinct in the Long Gardens. Bronze plaques, commemorating those who lost their lives during World War II, were later fixed to the east section of the perimeter balustrade. The Portland stone obelisk and the surrounding precinct, which we see today, were designed by R.L. Boulton & Sons, and was unveiled on 1st October 1921.
- 1.3 Whilst the cenotaph itself is not listed in its own right, it is curtilage listed as part of the grade II* listed Regency terrace which houses the Municipal Offices. The site is prominently located within the Montpellier character area, one of 19 character areas that together form Cheltenham's Central conservation area.
- 1.4 The application proposes various conservation works to the war memorial to include:
 - cleaning of the stonework
 - carrying out repairs to decayed and fractured stonework
 - repointing
 - re-cutting and re-filling deteriorated letters
 - incising 8no. new names to match original style
- 1.5 Two elements of the works originally proposed have been omitted from the scheme during the course of the application in response to concerns raised by Historic England; namely, the insertion of stainless steel flashing above the inscription panels and 4no. replacement lanterns.
- 1.6 The application is before the planning committee as Cheltenham Borough Council is the applicant.

2. CONSTRAINTS AND RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Constraints:

Conservation Area
Core Commercial Area
Smoke Control Order

Relevant Planning History:

12/01767/LBC

GRANT

11th February 2013

Replacement of paving slabs with natural stone paving. Replacement of edging of raised planting bed with Forest of Dean stone plinth. Installation of uplighters and LED strip lights to illuminate Cenotaph and plaques. Repair of plinth steps and balustrade stonework. Replacement of existing lanterns with replicas of those originally installed. Installation of information panels

3. POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Adopted Local Plan Policies

CP 3 Sustainable environment
CP 7 Design

4. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Heritage and Conservation

24th September 2015

Comments:

1. The proposed works are the result of an extensive programme to appoint a suitable conservation consultant who has then advised on the proposed works, who then oversaw a small trial panel of some of the proposed works, and then prepared the Design and Access Statement and application for listed building consent.
2. In general terms the proposed works are not only acceptable but the conservation approach as proposed is exemplar.
3. The proposed re-cutting of some of the eroded letters will not only allow the names to be legible, but also at the same time be the least invasive method of work to this historic structure. Therefore this method is welcomed, for its sensitive approach.
4. However it is recognised that the letter cutting on decayed stone and the necessary subtle corrections to individual letters, is an extremely specialised skill and the tender procurement process will need to also recognise this skill may be limited to a few individuals who will be able to complete this skilled work with at acceptable level of quality.
5. The schedule of the proposed works has been included on page 53 of the Design and Access Statement. Also included within the Design and Access Statement is a full method statement and justification for the various items of work to the stonework and lettering as proposed. All of this work is acceptable and I suggest that in relation to this work, a condition is attached to ensure that the work is undertaken in accordance with the Design and Access Statement.
6. However the proposed design of new lantern globes has yet to be confirmed in detail and the Design and Access Statement states that further information is awaited. Therefore I suggest that condition is attached, which asks for the detailed design of these lanterns prior to their installation.

SUMMARY: I do not object to the proposals.

SUGGESTED CONDITIONS RELATING TO CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE MATTERS:

LIS01C Design detail incl. elevations & sections

Prior to the installation of the lighting lantern fittings, the detailed design including materials, finishes and colour of these light fittings items shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The design and details shall be accompanied by elevations and section drawings to a minimum scale of 1:5 with full size moulding cross sections, where mouldings are used. The works shall thereafter be implemented strictly in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: To ensure that the design of the details listed are appropriate to the character of the building, which is listed as being of architectural or historic interest, thereby preserving the special architectural or historic interest which it possesses in accordance with Section

16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and national guidance set out within the National Planning Policy Framework and the Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide. These are important details which need to be constructed in a manner which ensures that they serve to preserve the special interest of the building.

Historic England

9th October 2015

Thank you for your letter of 16 September 2015 notifying Historic England of the above application.

Summary

It is understood that the Cenotaph is considered curtilage listed at Grade II* by Cheltenham Borough Council because of its association with the municipal buildings on the promenade, although it is likely to be considered for independent listing as part of the Historic England Strategic Project. The memorial was constructed in 1921 and paid for by donations. Its significance lies mainly in its historic value in commemorating the tragic loss of the First World War and the way in which it has subsequently been added to commemorate the loss in later conflicts.

Historic England supports the proposals to clean and repair this monument, agreeing that the approach outlined in the design and access statement is sensitive and appropriate. We are concerned however that the proposed stainless steel flashing will detrimentally impact on the aesthetic and architectural value of the monument's design and that further alternative solutions should be investigated. Further to this, at present the proposals to replace the existing lanterns with replicas of their earlier form are not supported by sufficient evidence or details to be agreed.

Historic England Advice

Significance of the heritage asset

The Cenotaph was constructed as the Cheltenham Town War Memorial in 1921. Initially a competition was held and four designs were shortlisted for the memorial, however due to the failure to raise the funds required to complete any of the shortlisted designs a revised scheme was requested from the architects R.L Boulton & Sons, a local masonry company. This design has been implemented and resulted in the memorial constructed.

Monuments of this type hold a great deal of historic significance; marking a great (and tragic) age of memorial building in the aftermath of the First World War. The Cenotaph in Cheltenham was paid for by the community and makes use of a conventional obelisk architectural design. Its prominent location and surrounding balustrading adds to its sense of impact and the continual investment in its upkeep and the addition of new plaques marking later conflicts attached to the balustrading signifies its continuing importance.

The Cenotaph is not currently an independently nationally designated heritage asset, however it is considered curtilage listed by Cheltenham Borough Council because of its association with the Grade II* to the municipal buildings on the promenade. The monument is likely to be assessed for independent listing as part of our strategic project to consider War Memorials for listing. War memorials attract considerable public interest and will warrant serious consideration for designating, especially during the centenary of the First World War. The Historic England Listing Selection Guide for Commemorative Structures (April, 2011) states that unless compromised by alteration or of little design interest, there is a presumption in favour of listing all war memorials.

Impact of the proposals on the heritage asset

This application proposes the cleaning of stonework, the carrying out of repairs to decayed and fractured stone, repointing, and inserting stainless steel flashing above inscription panels, re-cutting and re-filling deteriorated letters, incising 8 new names to match the

original style. There are also plans to install new heads to the 4 lanterns that currently surrounding the monument.

Historic England is keen to support the continuing upkeep of these important memorials and is pleased to see that the information provided by Odgers Conservation is very comprehensive and thorough. The trials undertaken include gentle cleaning methods which are very much advocated by Historic England, in contrast to the more intensive approaches that may have been undertaken in the past.

The decision to remove the grey re-painting and resin from lettering and re-fill with an appropriately specified mortar mix appears to be suitable and trials have worked well, however care should be taken when advocating re-cutting of lettering. As stated in the guidance provided jointly by Historic England (was English Heritage) and the War Memorials Trust in 2013 'The inscriptions on war memorials are of paramount significance' however it goes on to outline the complexity of issues surrounding methods of replacing or enhancing the legibility. These guidelines are referenced on page 41 of the Design and Access Statement accompanying this application which recognises that the lettering on the Cenotaph are still quite legible with only some losing definition. This acknowledges that the recommendation would normally be that 'consideration should be given to slightly sharpening the letters but not to totally re-cutting them since re-cutting can only take place once.' The proposed outline for works to the Cenotaph makes several references to the re-cutting of letters. Historic England would therefore highlight that the quality of this work and the detail of the specification provided will be key to ensuring the success of this delicate work. Only the minimum amount of re-cutting should be permitted to ensure the future legibility and mortar adherence. Further care should be taken to ensure that an appropriate mortar mix for the infilling of the letters is specified. At present these details have not been provided.

Further works propose the insertion of a rigid stainless steel flashing above the inscription panel (to be coated in RAL colour to match the Portland stone). Historic England is concerned that the addition of this new element will have a detrimental impact on the visual aesthetics and architectural design of the memorial, causing harm to the overall heritage significance of the monument (Para 134, NPPF). While we understand that some issues with regards to weathering and water run-off have been identified, we would request that alternative less intrusive options for management of water are investigated. An alternative way forward would be to withdraw this element of the scheme from the application and move forward with the cleaning and repair, after which a period of monitoring should be undertaken to better understand the need for such an intrusive new feature.

Finally, it is proposed to design and provide 4 new lantern heads based on archival evidence for their original design and form. The Historic England guidance document entitled 'Conservation Principles' (2008) is quite clear that restoration works should be justified by compelling evidence of the evolution of the place, and executed in accordance with that evidence. At present the Design and Access Statement provides only one, not very clear, image upon which to base any new lantern design. While we are not against the principle of lanterns that better represent the historic form of the war memorial, further evidence is required to better understand what that historic form may have been. We would also require detailed drawings of what is proposed before the impact of the alteration on the significance of the heritage asset and surrounding area could be assessed. At present the information provided is not sufficient to justify the proposed changes (Para 128, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)).

Relevant Planning Policy

In order that these works adhere to the requirements of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, section 66, which states that special regard should be given 'to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special

architectural or historic interest which it possesses', we would suggest that some alterations to the scheme are required.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 128, requires 'the applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected and that the level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance'. Due to the irreplaceable nature of these heritage assets 'any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification' as specified in paragraph 132.

Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that 'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.'

NPPF paragraph 137 is also relevant regarding developments within the settings of heritage assets, where local authorities are advised 'to look for opportunities for new development ...within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.'

The National Planning Policy Framework for England and planning practice guidance defines the setting of a heritage asset and 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral'.

Further to this, policies in NPPF paragraphs 7, 8, 9, and 17 are relevant. These concern the overarching objectives for conservation and sustainable development, the need to take opportunities for enhancement and the importance of avoiding conflict. Sustainable development in this context means a solution that achieves economic, social and environmental gains. Environmental gain includes the continued conservation of the affected heritage asset so that its high heritage value or significance can be enjoyed by this and future generations - an overarching planning objective (NPPF 17). If, in the development proposal, conflict has not been avoided, or opportunity not taken for enhancement, or harmful impacts of the development not clearly and convincingly justified and adequately mitigated, then the development will not be sustainable and national planning policy indicates that the local authority should refuse the application.

Recommendation

While Historic England is in full support of proposals to clean and repair the Cenotaph, we are unable to support this application in its present form. The introduction of stainless steel flashing (even when coloured) will impact on the aesthetic and architectural value of the war memorial and we would request that alternative solutions are considered. We are also concerned that the proposals for the replacement of the four lanterns are not supported by sufficient evidence and detail.

We would recommend that this application be deferred to allow further information to be provided and allow the applicant to consider making amendments that take account of the comments made above.

We would welcome the opportunity of advising further. Please consult us again if any additional information or amendments are submitted. If, notwithstanding our advice, you propose to approve the scheme in its present form, please advise us of the date of the committee and send us a copy of your report at the earliest opportunity.

Cheltenham Civic Society**16th October 2015**

We applaud the meticulous restoration of the Cenotaph, and much approve of the project being carried out during the centenary of World War One.

Heritage and Conservation**22nd October 2015**

Additional comments in response to Historic England:

1. In their report Historic England have expressed a number of concerns with regards to the proposals for various works to the War Memorial. These concerns related to the re-cutting of letters and the refill mortar mix, the proposed restoration of the lantern globes and the proposed lead flashing.
2. David Odgers, in his response, deals clearly with the issues raised.
3. Some of the matters raised by Historic England were referred to in the first report written by the Heritage and Conservation Manager. The re-cutting of letters was referred to and the issue of the lanterns was raised, and a condition related to design suggested.
4. The original Conservation report did not mention the lead flashing; however, the Officer comments on this matter were included in the application form itself. The proposed flashing was given clear support.

SUMMARY: The proposals in the application are supported, subject to the conditions referred to in the original response.

Historic England**10th November 2015**

We have received amended proposals for the above scheme.

Summary

Thank you for providing further information regarding the background and justification for the proposals outlined in this application.

The Cenotaph is an important and poignant memorial to those that lost their lives in conflict. It is situated in a prominent location in Cheltenham, and as outlined in our earlier response Historic England (dated 6th October 2015) is pleased to see that appropriate restoration works are being undertaken.

The understated obelisk and plinth design of the memorial, with relatively subdued detailing and a pleasing simplicity of form; creates a robustness that is important for its overall visual aesthetics. The obvious communal value of the memorial associated with purpose of honouring the dead, is further expanded by the understanding of its conception via a competition and the resulting revision of the winning design due to difficulty in raising the appropriate funds. The memorial as constructed was built to designs by a local masonry company, R. C Boulton & Sons.

Historic England Advice

In the context of the extra information and justification provided I have further considered the potential impacts of the proposed stainless steel flashing on the heritage significance and value of the war memorial. Having discussed the matter with a Historic England Heritage Architect, Chris Miners, we have reached the conclusion that the harm caused to the memorial will not, in heritage terms, be outweighed by the benefits of this solution.

While we understand that the memorial is suffering to some degree of deterioration, caused in the large part as a result of intensive cleaning, we continue to hold the view that the

proposed solution will be intrusive and damaging to the architectural design and form of the memorial. Further to this we are also of the view that the proposed flashing will not significantly improve the future effects of weathering on the memorial. The relatively shallow projection of the proposed flashing will mean that rain water will still be blown directly onto the memorial, and draining water will also be blown back towards the memorial before hitting the ground. Therefore, while the projection will decrease the extent of water run-off by a small percentage, this will not be significant enough to dramatically limit harm over time.

When considering this against the extent of harm that will be caused by the introduction of the flashing, we do not consider it to be justified. While the introduction of the flashing may appear to be a relatively minor alteration to the design of the memorial, it impacts significantly on the simple lines and architectural robustness of the memorial as a whole and therefore will cause harm to its aesthetic, evidential, communal and historical value.

The Conservation, Repair and Management of War Memorials document produced by Historic England and The War Memorials Trust, acknowledges that it is 'necessary to be realistic about the amount of improvement to legibility that can be achieved without causing damage to the historic character of a memorial'. At present the legibility of the memorial is not at risk of erasure and the names are also recorded, as best practice requires. As evidenced in your trials; cleaning of the memorial can be achieved with relatively low intensity methods which will minimise future algae growth and this should have a positive impact on both the aesthetics and the future condition and legibility of the memorial. In order to ensure that the most appropriate cleaning methods are implemented moving forward we would recommend that a management plan for the memorial is implemented by Cheltenham Borough Council.

The Design and Access Statement provided by Odgers Conservation states that 'without attention and if the current cleaning regime were to be allowed to continue, then 20-30 years, the situation might have been worse so that the inscriptions might then be becoming illegible'. On the basis that the proposed repairs and restoration, and the implementation of a more appropriate cleaning regime should minimise the potential risk of this erosion, we would recommend that a monitoring programme be put in place to understand the true rate of decay and better inform the requirement for alternative and more harmful solutions in the future.

Recommendation

Historic England would therefore recommend that the restoration and repair programme outlined in the initial schedule is undertaken, but that proposals for the installation of the stainless steel flashing is omitted from this application. That a program of monitoring is put in place to understand the on-going deterioration of the memorial and the risk to the legibility of the inscriptions and a management plan to ensure that the future cleaning methods are the most appropriate to consider the future of the memorial.

5. PUBLICITY AND REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.1 Given the nature of the proposal, individual letters of notification were not sent out on this occasion but two site notices were posted and an advert placed in the Gloucestershire Echo. No representations have been received in response to the publicity.

6. OFFICER COMMENTS

- 6.1 Following the omission of the more contentious areas of works, the proposal is to grant listed building consent.

- 6.2 The Conservation Officer describes the conservation approach taken as being “exemplar” and the outcome of the works in restoring the names in the test area has been described as “excellent”.
- 6.3 In addition, the works proposed in cleaning the stonework, carrying out the repairs to decayed and fractured stonework, repointing, re-cutting and re-filling deteriorated letters, and incising 8no. new names to match original style is supported by Historic England.

7. SUGGESTED CONDITIONS

- 1 The works hereby granted consent shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this consent.
Reason: To accord with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The works hereby granted consent shall be carried out in accordance with Drawing No. PD000 and the Schedule of Works set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement, as amended by the applicant's correspondence dated 10th November 2015.
Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in strict accordance with the approved details.