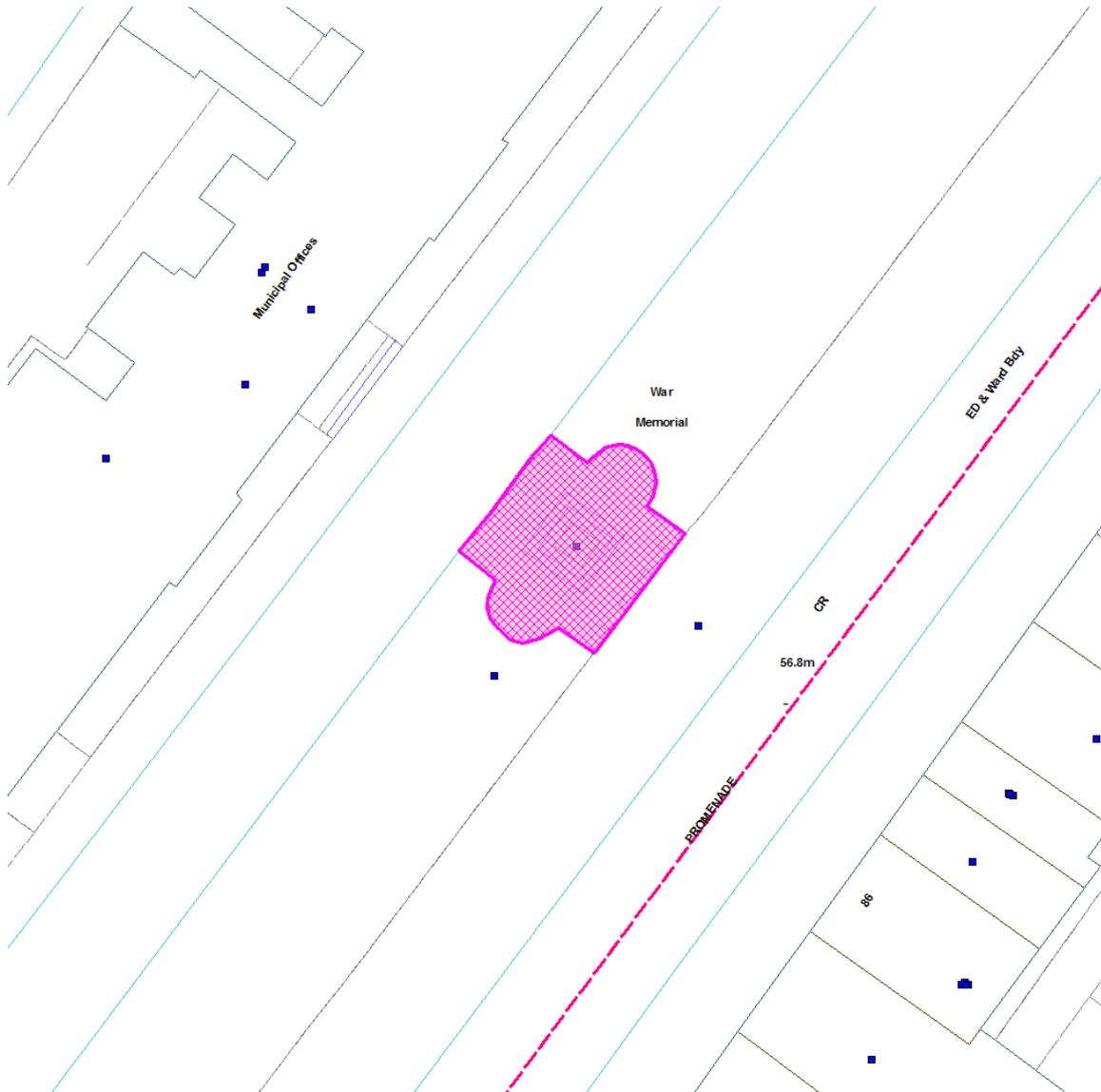


APPLICATION NO: 16/00728/LBC	OFFICER: Ms Wendy Tomlinson
DATE REGISTERED: 26th April 2016	DATE OF EXPIRY: 21st June 2016
WARD: Lansdown	PARISH:
APPLICANT:	Cheltenham Borough Council
AGENT:	Cheltenham Borough Council
LOCATION:	Cenotaph, Promenade, Cheltenham
PROPOSAL:	Insertion of a narrow stainless steel flashing above inscription panels

RECOMMENDATION: Grant



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1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND PROPOSAL

The War Memorial is located in a prominent position set centrally within formal gardens to the front of the Municipal Offices on the Promenade. Although not listed in its own right it is considered to be a curtilage listed structure and within the curtilage of the grade II* listed terrace so is afforded the same level of heritage protection as the terrace.

The proposal is to insert a stainless steel flashing, 90MM deep with a 50MM overhang and a rolled edge between the top of the inscription panel on the base of the monolith and the moulding.

2. CONSTRAINTS AND RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Constraints:

Conservation Area
Core Commercial Area
Smoke Control Order

Relevant Planning History:

12/01767/LBC 11th February 2013 GRANT

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.

14/01340/DISCON 24th September 2014 DISCHA

Discharge of conditions 4 and 5 of listed building consent ref. 12/01767/LBC

15/01604/LBC 10th December 2015 GRANT

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

3. POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Adopted Local Plan Policies

BE 9 Alteration of listed buildings

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Central conservation area: Montpellier Character Area and Management Plan (Feb 2007)

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

4. CONSULTATIONS

Historic England

17th May 2016

Thank you for your letter of 12 May 2016 notifying us of the application for listed building consent relating to the above site. We do not wish to comment in detail, but offer the following general observations.

Historic England Advice

It is understood that the Cenotaph is considered Grade II* curtilage listed 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, commemorating loss in later conflicts.

Historic England gave pre-application advice on this scheme in April 2016, following a site meeting on 1 March 2016 with Cheltenham Borough Council, the War Memorials Trust, and Odgers Conservation, where a sample section installed on the eastern corner was inspected. Our ensuing comments discussed how the debate surrounding the protection and preservation of the monument - in particular the incised names on the principal block - over the authenticity and integrity of this historic asset as a stone-built, set-piece memorial having the freedom and discretion to weather naturally, required sensitive consideration.

This proposal has not changed since the pre-application discussions, to which we believed that on balance the site visit ascertained the relatively minor visual intervention of the steel flashing, and taking into account the potential loss of the incised names that contribute heavily to the asset's significance and communal value, we considered this approach to be acceptable. We therefore do not wish to raise any further comments in relation to this scheme, and indeed judge it to be a well-considered, reversible solution to protect this significant communal asset.

Recommendation

We urge you to address the above issues, and recommend that this application be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your expert conservation advice. It is not necessary for us to be consulted again. If you feel you need further advice, please let us know why.

Please re-consult us if there are material changes to the proposals beyond those necessary to address the issues we have raised. We will then consider whether such changes might lead us to object. If they do, and if your authority is minded to grant consent, you should notify the Secretary of State of this application in accordance with the above Direction.

5. PUBLICITY AND REPRESENTATIONS

Number of letters sent	
Total comments received	0
Number of objections	0
Number of supporting	0
General comment	0

A notice was displayed on site and an advertisement placed in the Gloucestershire Echo as required.

6. OFFICER COMMENTS

6.1 Determining Issues

The key issues are the visual impact of the proposal on the war memorial and whether its authenticity and integrity is compromised by the addition of the flashing. The objective

laid down at the outset of this project by Cheltenham Borough Council was to “ensure that the nature of the restoration safeguards the longevity of the memorial” therefore continuing as before is not an option.

6.2 The site and its context

The objective of the flashing is to redirect rainwater away from the stone surface of the inscription panel. Currently substantial sections of the stonework remain saturated for prolonged periods, and this combined with the specific environmental conditions of this location encourages the growth of algae on the surface of the stone causing the inscriptions to become disfigured and obscured. Repeated harsh cleaning methods to remove the algae growth have accelerated erosion and opened up the pores in the stone, this in turn encourages further algae growth.

It is evident that this cycle needs to be arrested or at least slowed down and the proposal seeks to do this by dispersing rainwater away from the surface of the stone. This was proposed as part of an earlier scheme (15/01604/LBC) for cleaning the stonework and carrying out repairs to the stone, re-pointing, re-cutting and re-filling of the deteriorated letters and incising new names to match the original style. The proposal to insert the flashing was withdrawn to give further time for consideration of the impact of this proposal on the war memorial, on its setting and the setting of the listed terrace and whether an alternative method of protecting the stone could be found.

At the time of the previous application a trial was undertaken on the memorial with a corner piece of stainless steel flashing inserted into the mortar joint: this was both to test its effectiveness and to give an impression of what the intervention would look like.

Subsequent pre-application discussions between Cheltenham Borough Council, the War Memorials Trust and Historic England took place in April when the impact of the trial section was assessed. In light of this assessment Historic England have now amended their view and support this proposal, stating that “on balance the site visit ascertained the relatively minor visual intervention of the steel flashing, and taking into account the potential loss of the incised names that contribute heavily to the asset's significance and communal value, we considered this approach to be acceptable”.

The trial area has been under observation since its installation and the flashing has demonstrated beyond doubt its effectiveness in preventing the stone from becoming water-logged, therefore the remaining issue is the visual impact of the intervention.

The steel flashing is undoubtedly an incongruous addition to the stone memorial but the proposed surface treatment to the steel will reduce its reflectiveness and help it blend with the stone. This will help to mitigate its visual impact and the placing of the flashing into a mortar joint means it is fully reversible which will allow for an alternative approach to be considered in the future.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The addition of a narrow stainless steel flashing to the war memorial is recommended for approval subject to no other planning issues arising from discussion at Planning Committee.

8. 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 development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed in Schedule 1 of this decision notice.
Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
- 3 All new and disturbed surfaces shall be made good at the time of development using materials of matching composition, form and finish to those of the listed building.
Reason: To ensure that the character, appearance and integrity of the building is not prejudiced, 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.