



ENGLISH HERITAGE  
NORTH WEST REGION

DIRECTOR OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES	
14 NOV 2011	
FAO	

Mr Adrian Dowd  
Ribble Valley Borough Council  
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Our ref: L00115400

11 November 2011

Dear Mr Dowd

**Notifications under Circular 01/2001, Circular 08/2009 & GDPO 1995**  
**TALBOT HOTEL, 5 TALBOT STREET, CHIPPING, PRESTON, LANCASHIRE, PR3**  
**2QE**  
**Application No 3/2011/0821**

Thank you for your letter of 27 October 2011 notifying English Heritage of the above application.

**Summary**

The Talbot Hotel and the Stable and barn to the south west of Talbot Hotel are both Grade II listed in recognition of their national architectural and historic interest. Both buildings date from the late C18 and derive significance from their relationship and make an important contribution to the Chipping conservation area.

The proposal is to refurbish and extend the existing hotel to create 9no. bedrooms, a function suite, restaurant and bar with ancillary kitchen facilities. The proposals also involves converting the Stables and barn to form 11no. ensuite bedrooms.

We welcome in principal the proposal to bring the Grade II listed hotel back into use and to introduce a new use to the Grade II listed stable and barn. However we are unconvinced that the current proposal responds adequately to the character and significance of the Grade II listed buildings and their setting and wish to offer the following advice.

Our advice is provided in line with Planning Policy Statement 5 'Planning for the Historic Environment' (PPS5), The Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide (HEPPG) (English Heritage, 2010) and English Heritage Conservation Principles (2008).

**English Heritage Advice**



SUITES 3.3 AND 3.4 CANADA HOUSE 3 CHEPSTOW STREET MANCHESTER M1 5FW

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**Grade II listed Stable and Barn**

We understand that the Grade II listed stable and barn is redundant and that there is no realistic likelihood of agricultural use returning. We therefore appreciate the need for a sustainable and sympathetic new use to be found.

The Government's overarching aim, set out in para. 7 of PPS5, is that the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. An important part of achieving this is to ensure that wherever possible, heritage assets are put to an appropriate and viable use consistent with their conservation.

In assessing proposals for change, PPS5, policy HE9.1 requires a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets. Where a proposal would result in harm to a designated heritage asset, the justification provided should be tested against the criteria set out under either policy HE9.2 or HE9.4.

We are extremely sorry to hear that unauthorised works have taken place at the Stables and barn, including the removal of stalls, partitions, troughs and a hay loft. This work has had a harmful impact on the significance of the Grade II listed building. We understand that in considering how to deal with this issue your Planning Committee has resolved that it is in the public interest not to prosecute the owner given the unique circumstances in this instance including regeneration issues. Nevertheless, we wish to highlight that the loss of historic fabric and features which contribute to the special interest of a nationally designated heritage asset is extremely regrettable and in assessing the current planning and listed building consent applications we draw your attention to the need to consider policy HE7.6 of PPS5.

Notwithstanding the loss of important elements of the Grade II listed building and whilst appreciating that there are financial arguments surrounding the viability of the proposed scheme, such as the number of bedrooms which need to be delivered on the site, we are concerned that the current proposal may not represent the optimum viable use for the Grade II listed Stable and barn. Similarly, there may be less harmful ways to achieve the proposed level of development on site whilst preserving more of the character and interest of both Grade II listed buildings.

The conversion of the Stables and barn into an ancillary accommodation block containing 11no. ensuite bedrooms would require a particularly intensive level subdivision, alteration and upgrading of fabric which would fundamentally alter the character of the Grade II listed building and have a major impact on its historic interest. We therefore question whether as part of the process of developing the Business Plan for the site, the option of using the Stables and barn for alternative uses such as a function room and / or restaurant has been considered.



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The barn is 5 bays wide and therefore large than average size and the open character of the interior is an important part of the significance of the Grade II listed building. Introducing a new open plan / flexible space into the building would have the benefit of preserving the character of the interior of the interior and be more in-keeping with its original function. This would also reduce the need for an intensive level subdivision, upgrading of internal walls and introduction of services, pipework, drainage, serving etc, as currently proposed and could perhaps also involve the re-instatement of features of interest. This could also be seen as a public benefit as it would allow greater public access to the building and create a more characterful function room with an active frontage to the street.

**Extension to the rear of the Grade II listed hotel**

PPS5, policy HE7.5 requires local planning authorities when assessing proposals to take into account the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment. At present, the proposed extensions, by virtue of their scale, height, massing and roofscape, have an overbearing impact on the Grade II listed Hotel. The HEPPG, para 186 states that 'new features added to a building are less likely to have an impact on the significance if they follow the character of the building. The design of the various structures at the rear do not in our view respond to the character and appearance of the Grade II listed hotel or the Grade II listed barn.

Therefore, should your Authority be satisfied that the need for the amount of new development has been justified, we suggest that consideration should be given to the desirability of introducing a more subservient extension, or separate accommodation block to the rear of the Hotel or Stables and barn. This could be achieved through a simplified design of lower units, possibly with an agricultural outbuilding character, set in a linear arrangement or arranged in a courtyard plan which would be more sympathetic to the layout and setting of the hotel, result in a less harmful impact on the setting of both Grade II listed buildings, addressing PPS5, policy HE10.2.

**Internal alterations proposed to the Grade II listed Talbot Hotel**

We welcome the identification of features, fixtures and fittings of interest presented in the Historic Building Assessment and the retention of these items. With regards to areas of loss, we advise that your authority should assess the impact of the various internal alterations proposed against the criteria set out in PPS5, policy HE9.4.

The HEPPG, para. 182 states that the plan form of a building is frequently one of its most important characteristics and proposals to modify internal arrangements, including the insertion of new openings, will be subject to the same considerations of impact on significance as for externally visible alterations.



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The proposed new opening through principal internal wall on the second floor, into bedroom 19, would result in the loss of historic fabric and appears to lack justification and could be avoided through amending the proposed layout. We suggest that it may well be possible to make an ensuite in the within the room, similar to bedroom 18, or alternatively to have a separately accessible bathroom, or an ensuite, in order to avoid the impact on significant historic fabric. Similarly, on the first floor, reversing the ensuite arrangements for bedrooms 13 and 14 would result in less loss of historic fabric.

We welcome the retention of the existing historic staircase, however, the proposed new staircase external staircase and rear glass box extension at first floor level will have an impact on the rear elevation of the building. We urge that you should be satisfied that the need for an additional staircase and internal space to the rear has been adequately justified.

**Recommendation**

We urge you to consider the issues raised above in assessing the impact of the proposed scheme will have on the significance of both Grade II listed buildings and the character and appearance of the conservation area.

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.

Yours sincerely

**Kerry Babington**

Historic Buildings and Areas Advisor

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cc



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