

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>PLANNING AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>15 November 2017</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>171897 - TO ERECT SIGNAGE TO THE EXTERNAL FACADE ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE BUILDING AND ON THE CHIMNEY BREAST AT THE MASTERS HOUSE ST KATHERINES, BYE STREET, LEDBURY, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR8 1EA</b>  <b>For: Mr P Huggett, Herefordshire Council, Plough Lane Offices, Plough Lane, Hereford HR4 0LE</b>
<b>WEBSITE LINK:</b>	<a href="https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/planning_application_search/details?id=171897&amp;search=171897">https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/planning_application_search/details?id=171897&amp;search=171897</a>
<b>Reason Application submitted to Committee – Council interest</b>	

**Date Received: 25 May 2017**      **Ward: Ledbury North**      **Grid Ref: 371033,237650**  
**Expiry Date: 31 October 2017**  
Local Member: Councillor EPJ Harvey

## **1. Site Description and Proposal**

- 1.1 The Master's House is a multi-phase 15th century Grade II\* listed building located adjacent to St Katherine's car park, to the south west of the High Street in Ledbury. The building is within Ledbury Conservation Area. The building is used for both the Ledbury Library and also Council offices. The building has been undergoing recent refurbishment and improvements.
- 1.2 The building is significant historically for the way in which the successive layers of history explain its biography and architecturally as a rich example of a medieval hall house associated with a key figure in Ledbury's History. It has strong associative value to the people of Ledbury and as a Grade II\* listed building is of national significance.
- 1.3 The proposal seeks listed building consent for the erection of signage, 'The Master's House' on the northern elevation and 'the Master's House – Library. Culture. Community' on the chimney breast on the eastern elevation. The colour of the signs will be Anthracite Cool Grey. The letters will be individually fixed onto the elevation within the mortar joints of the brick work to avoid damage. The dimensions of the signs will be some 1.15 metres tall by some 1.85 metres wide.

## **2. Policies**

### **2.1 Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-2031:-**

- SS6 – Environmental Quality and Local Distinctiveness
- LD1 – Landscape and townscape
- LD4 – Historic Environment and heritage assets

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mrs G Webster on 01432 260139

SD1 – Sustainable Design and Energy Efficiency

## 2.2 NPPF

Chapter 12 – Conserving and enhancing the Historic Environment is of particular relevance to this application, particularly in the context that CS Policy LD4 does not describe the approach to decision-making in the event that harm to significance is evidenced.

## 2.3 Neighbourhood Plans

There is currently no Neighbourhood Development Plan for Ledbury.

## 2.4 The Core Strategy policies together with any relevant supplementary planning documentation can be viewed on the Council's website by using the following link:-

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200185/local\\_plan/137/adopted\\_core\\_strategy](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200185/local_plan/137/adopted_core_strategy)

## 3. Planning History

- 3.1 P170908/L – Proposal to erect signage to the external façade of the building – withdrawn
- 3.2 P150041/F – Alterations to landscape surrounding The Master's House (part retrospective) – approved
- 3.3 N123081/F & N123080/L – Extensive repair and renovation – Approved with conditions
- 3.4 N112303/L – External repairs to brickwork, sash windows and roof to bay window, replacement windows cills, door and flue – Approved with conditions
- 3.5 N101724/L & N100903/CD – Remove and rebuild boundary wall – Approved with conditions
- 3.6 NE2009/0932/L – re instatement of historic panel room, removal of plasterboard and timber stud partitioning – Approved with conditions
- 3.7 NE2008/0689/L – proposed sliding doors to inner entrance lobby and widening of corridor door – Approved with conditions
- 3.8 NE2007/3601/L – Internal alterations – Approved with conditions
- 3.9 NE2006/3306/L – Removal and erection of stud partitions, repair and re-glazing of windows. Redecoration – Approved with conditions

## 4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

### 4.1 Historic England

No objection

### 4.2 Internal Council Consultations

#### Historic Buildings Officer

The revised details and signage proposals respond to the concerns previously raised about the appearance and fixings of the signage. As the tuck pointed brickwork in one location is

new and the other location would originally have likely been rendered or lime - washed individual fixings into mortar joints would be a discrete and reversible solution. As such the proposals accord with policies within the CS and NPPF and we would withdraw our objection to the proposals.

## 5. Representations

### 5.1 Ledbury Town Council

Support. However members did not support the incorporation of the black line "Library, Culture, Community". They felt it was unnecessary and detracts from the Listed Building.

### 5.2 Ledbury & District Civic Society

It is in every way unworthy of this fine building and we cannot understand why, if extra signage is required for The Master's House, the architects for the building Gary Butler Partnership, have not been asked to prepare an appropriate scheme. This proposal looks like a pub sign.

### 5.3 Six letters of support were received, the comments included:

- A clear visible sign is needed
- Will avoid the clutter of more free-standing signs in the town centre
- The sign is a good example of a sign to identify the building
- Visitors will be able to identify the building

One letter of objection was received with the following points:

- Proposal is dreadful
- Looks like a pub sign

### 5.4 The consultation responses can be viewed on the Council's website by using the following link:-

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200185/local\\_plan/137/adopted\\_core\\_strategy](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200185/local_plan/137/adopted_core_strategy)

Internet access is available at the Council's Customer Service Centres:-

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/government-citizens-and-rights/customer-services-enquiries/contact-details?q=customer&type=suggestedpage>

## 6. Officer's Appraisal

### Impact upon Grade II\* Listed Building

#### 6.1 Section 66 of the Planning (listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 details: -

*(1) In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, 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.*

#### 6.2 These provisions can be taken as the Council's "heritage duties." This means that the Local Authority have a duty to have special regard when exercising its functions to the preservation of Listed Buildings and its setting.

#### 6.3 Herefordshire Core Strategy Policy LD4 states that '*Proposals should protect, conserve and where possible enhance, heritage assets and their setting in a manner appropriate to their significance. Where opportunities exist, contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of*

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*the townscape, especially within conservation areas.*” However Policy LD4 does not have a mechanism for decision-making where harm to the significance of a heritage asset is identified, and recourse must be made to the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 6.4 NPPF paragraph 132 states 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. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably... grade I and II\* listed buildings, should be wholly exceptional.”*
- 6.5 Paragraph 133 confirms that substantial harm to significance should not be permitted unless circumstances are wholly exceptional, whilst less than substantial harm (paragraph 134), should be weighed in an unweighted planning balance.
- 6.6 Original plans were submitted which showed the letters fixed to a horizontal bar, with the horizontal bar in turn affixed directly to the fabric of the building. Following concerns raised by the Historic Buildings Officer, the plans were amended and submitted to the Council on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2017. These detailed the affixation of each individual letter within the mortar of the brickwork, thus reduced the visual ‘shadow’ of a bar behind the lettering, and making the wording clearer.
- 6.7 The amended signage is thus by comparison simple and clearer; particularly to visitors to the area who may not be familiar with Ledbury. Taken together they provide identity to the building without the additional clutter of street ‘A boards’ around the building. At 4.2 above the Conservation Manager records no objection to the amended proposal and is content that the signage will not have an adverse impact on the building’s significance. The lack of impact on truly historic fabric and the reversibility of the work are also noted. Accordingly the requirements of LD4 and the NPPF are met and the Council’s heritage duties discharged.

### **Conclusion**

- 6.8 Taken as a whole the proposal is not considered to lead to harm to the significance of the listed building. In the event that less than substantial harm is identified, the benefit of such a scheme outweighs any less than substantial harm such that Listed Building Consent should not be withheld. The proposal satisfies the requirements set out in Core Strategy Policies LD1, LD4 and SD1. Accordingly, the proposal is recommended for approval with conditions.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That Listed Building Consent be granted subject to the following conditions and any other conditions considered necessary by officers names in the scheme of delegation to officers:**

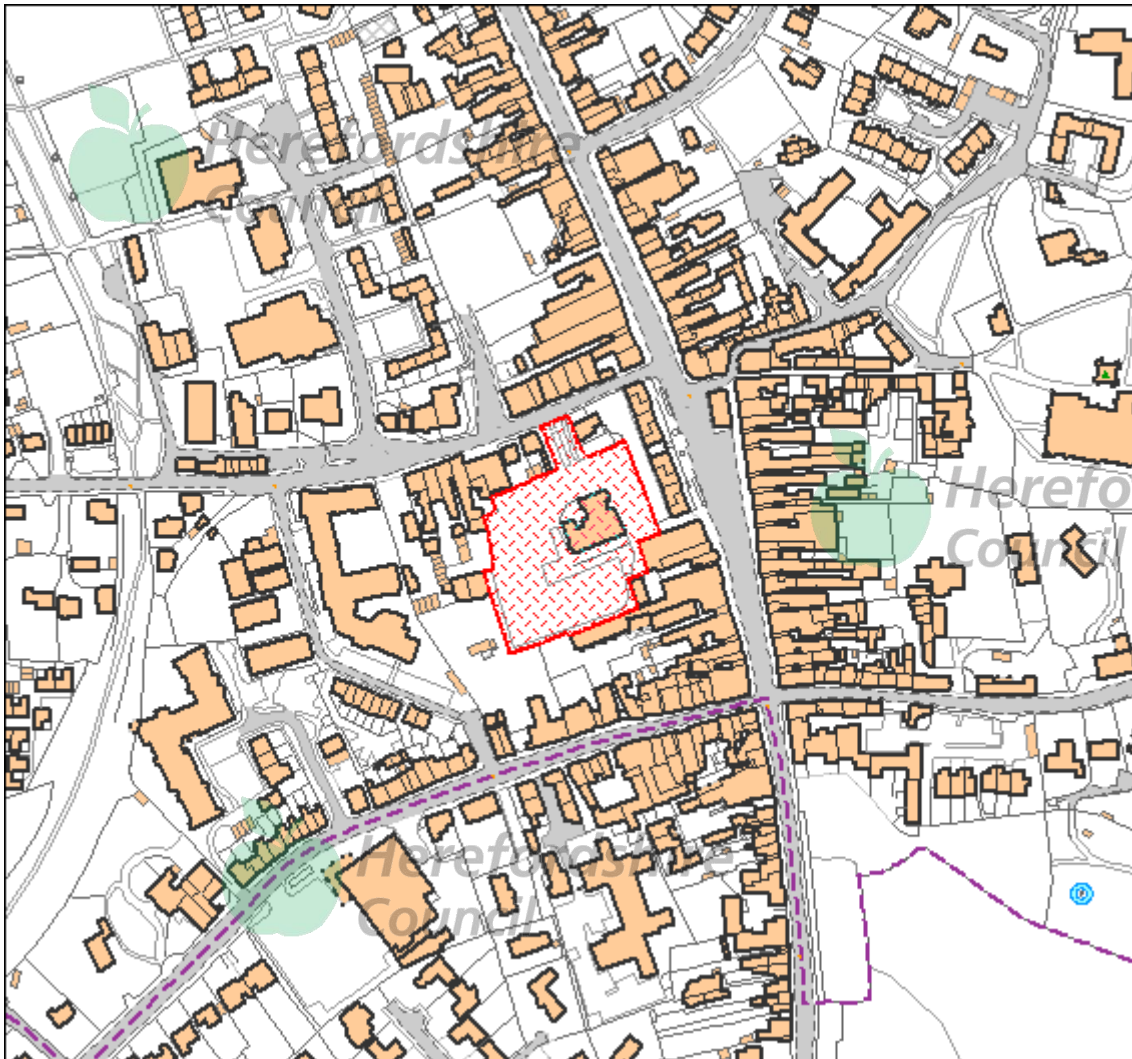
- 1. **D01 Time limit for commencement (Listed Building Consent)**
- 2. **B01 Development in accordance with the approved plans**

Decision: .....

Notes: .....

### **Background Papers**

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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**APPLICATION NO:** 171897

**SITE ADDRESS :** THE MASTERS HOUSE ST KATHERINES, BYE STREET, LEDBURY,  
HEREFORDSHIRE, HR8 1EA

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