

<b>Application No:</b>	<a href="#">3/37/18/026</a>
<b>Parish</b>	Watchet
<b>Application Type</b>	Listed Building Consent
<b>Case Officer:</b>	Elizabeth Peeks
<b>Grid Ref</b>	Easting: 307104    Northing: 143272
<b>Applicant</b>	Mr Andrew Coram
<b>Proposal</b>	Installation of roof window to rear elevation
<b>Location</b>	8 Swain Street, Watchet, TA23 0AB
<b>Reason for referral to Committee</b>	<b>The recommendation is contrary to the views of the Town Council.</b>

## Recommendation

Recommended decision: Refuse

### Reasons for refusal:

- 1 In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the installation of a conservation roof light in the position proposed would lead to visual clutter to the uniform character and appearance of the roof and the adjoining roofs and would jar with the uniformity of the roof due to the position of the proposed roof light between two dormers. This would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed building but the minimal public harm does not outweigh the harm. The proposal is therefore not in accordance with policies NH1 and NH2 of the West Somerset District Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework in particular Chapter 16.
- 2 In addition the installation of a conservation roof light in the position proposed would lead to visual clutter to the uniform character and appearance of the roof and the adjoining roofs and would jar with the uniformity of the roof due to the position of the proposed roof light between two dormers. This would not preserve the character and appearance of Watchet Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore not in accordance with policy NH2 of the West Somerset District Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework, in particular Chapter 16.

## Proposal

The proposal is to install a conservation roof light on the rear elevation. The roof light will be located above but to the side of the dormer window that is located on the lower section of the roof.

## Site Description

8 Swain Street is a Grade II listed building situated on the main road that runs through Watchet. The three storey building which has a slate roof is part of a row of 4 buildings all of which are Grade II listed buildings. The building is stone on the front elevation and rendered on the rear elevation. The properties are also located with the designated Watchet Conservation Area. To the rear of the property is a garden with Anchor Street car park beyond.

## Relevant Planning History

Case Ref	Proposal	Decision	Decision Date
3/37/07/025	Window replacement & re-rendering to rear, reproofing, removal of porch and internal works including installation of heating system.	Grant	20 August 2007
3/37/07/044	Window replacement, re-rendering, reroofing, removal of porch, installation of heating system and rebuilding of chimney	Grant	29 November 2007

## Consultation Responses

*Watchet Town Council* - The Committee recommends approval.

## Representations Received

None received.

## Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The development plan for the West Somerset planning area comprises the West Somerset Local Plan to 2032, retained saved policies of the West Somerset District Local Plan (2006) Somerset Minerals Local Plan (2015) and Somerset Waste Core Strategy (2013).

Relevant policies of the development plan are listed below.

## West Somerset Local Plan to 2032

NH1	Historic Environment
NH2	Management of Heritage Assets

### Determining issues and considerations

As 8 Swain Street is a Grade II listed building this application must be determined in accordance with Section 16 (2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This requires that the listed building, its setting and any features of historic or architectural interest must be preserved when considering whether to grant listed building consent.

The roof light is proposed to light the roof space to enable the roof space to be used for storage. Currently the loft is not boarded out and at the time of the site visit was not in use. The installation of the roof light would not result in the loss of historic fabric as the roof has been replaced as listed building consent was granted in 2007 to replace the roof covering. The introduction of the roof light however would add visual clutter to a roof which has four evenly spaced dormer windows. The proposed roof light is to be located in such a way that it is not equi distance between the dormers on either side of the proposed roof light which will jar with the uniform pattern of the roof lights. It is considered that this will adversely affect the character and appearance of the listed building and the setting of the row of listed buildings.

The NPPF states that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed building (as in this case) this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. These public benefits can include:

- It sustains or enhances the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting.
- It reduces or removes risks to a heritage asset.
- It secures the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation.
- It makes a positive contribution to economic vitality and sustainable communities.
- It is an appropriate design for its context and makes a positive contribution to the appearance, character, quality and local distinctiveness of the historic environment.
- It better reveals the significance of a heritage asset and therefore enhances our enjoyment of it and the sense of place.

The Agent has put forward the following reasons as to why the proposal is in the public interest:

*As things currently stand the first/second floor flat cannot be properly used or rented out to anyone else as it is filled with additional stock. The inclusion of the roof*

*window will allow for sensible use of the loft space as a storage area for the shop. While the loft will not be used all the time it may be needed to be accessed for a couple of half days a week to allow for changing over of stock and cataloguing. The roof window will allow for natural light to save the use of artificial lights and allow for some natural ventilation to the space which would be unbearable to work in over the summer months without. The new roof window will allow for not only optimum use, but also sensible use of both flat and shop which that must be of public benefit as it is defined in the NPPF.*

*The owner is also investing in maintaining the property properly and improving the life of the building by using better conservation products and techniques in the repairs. There are currently repairs being carried out to the front and roof and the overhaul of the roof is part of the current plan to stop some very minor leaks when the roof space is used for storage. If the roof space cannot be sensibly used for storage the repairs to the roof may be reconsidered, I am not sure the owner will be able to justify spending thousands of pounds to repair leadwork, slates and adding ventilation that will have no practical benefits. If the loft is able to be used the repairs will allow for a better overall standard of construction which in the long term will provide better protection to the fabric. The two things go together and better fabric protection together with sensible viable use must provide suitable public benefit for the very minor change proposed.*

The argument that the use of the loft for storage and cataloguing the stock for the shop on the ground floor is understood but this could be carried out in the existing out buildings which would be easier to access than having to go up two flights of stairs within the maisonette to reach the loft. In addition, as access would be required through the maisonette to get to the loft the maisonette could not realistically be rented out as suggested to a third party. The argument that less electricity would be used is not considered to be in the public interest as this would be so little especially as the loft is only to be used for approximately one day a week

The fact that the Agent states that the repair works to the roof may not be undertaken is not relevant especially as the NPPF clearly states that where there is deliberate neglect or damage to a heritage asset the deteriorated state of the building should not be taken into account. It should be pointed out that it is not considered that the applicant is doing this especially as repair works are currently being undertaken

It is considered that there is no public benefit of the proposal as the property is already in its optimum use as a shop and dwelling and does not meet the other examples of public benefit noted above as well as the fact that less electricity will be used should a roof light be installed does not outweigh the harm to the significance of the listed building.

As 8 Swain Street is situated in a Conservation Area, the application must be determined in accordance with Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This requires that special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. It is considered that for the reasons given above that the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would not be preserved.

In conclusion it is considered that the less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed building is not outweighed by the public benefit and in addition the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is not preserved. The proposal is therefore not in accordance with local plan policies or the NPPF. The proposal is therefore recommended for refusal.

In preparing this report the planning officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.



Application No 3/37/18/026  
 Installation of roof window to rear  
 elevation  
 8 Swain Street, Watchet



Planning Manager  
 West Somerset Council,  
 West Somerset House  
 Killick Way  
 Williton TA4 4QA  
 West Somerset Council  
 Licence Number: 100023932

This Map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the  
 permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the controller of  
 HMSO © Crown Copyright.  
 Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may  
 lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.  
 Easting: 307098  
 Northing: 143273  
 Scale: 1:1250



