

**CUMBERLAND COUNCIL**  
**CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

---

**Proposal:** New opening in stone boundary wall and installation of electric car charger

**Address:** Sella Park, Calder Bridge

**Reference:** 4/23/2378/OL1

**Date:** 20/12/23

---

**Description:** Sella Park is a grade II listed building incorporating a 14<sup>th</sup> century pele tower, with 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century additions and alterations.

**Conclusion:** No objection

**Assessment:**

- The wall is considered to be part of the curtilage of the main building, and therefore to be part of the listed fabric.
- An opening is needed in the wall to provide pedestrian access from the main hotel building to the new section being created in a disused barn on the north side.
- As observed in the D, A and H statement, the wall is brick faced on one side and sandstone rubble on the other, and this may be to present a more polite façade towards the main house. Additionally, the walls of walled gardens are often constructed using masonry e.g. red sandstone on one side yet faced with brick on the other (this can be observed, for example, at the walled garden at Pelham House, a short distance away). The purpose of this was that the brick absorbs and then re-releases heat very slowly and evenly, which keeps the wall evenly warmed and therefore suitable for growing. I note that the brick elevation also faces due south, and wonder if this may have been to make the wall more suitable for growing plants against, and whether it played a role in evening out hot and cold spots caused by the shadow of the building tracking across the wall during the day.
- I would view the insertion of the opening as consisting of a minor level of less-than-substantial harm, justified by the need to access the barn and mitigated by the detailing.
- I raise the question of whether the narrow section of wall abutting the corner of the barn will be stable once the opening is made. Perhaps this will need tying into the barn wall.
- The car charging points appear minimal in scale, minor in impact, and justified by the need to provide a charging service.

In summary, I view both aspects of the proposal as sufficiently justified by the need and mitigated by the execution as to be supportable.

---

**Relevant Policies and Guidance:**

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 establishes a need “in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works [for the Local Planning Authority to] have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest” [Section 16(2)]. This requirement also applies to the granting of planning permission affecting a listing building or its setting [Section 66(1)].

Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) asserts that “Development that is not well designed should be refused”.

NPPF para. 197 states that “In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation...”

NPPF para. 199 states, in the case of designated heritage assets, “great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation”, irrespective of whether potential harm is substantial, less-than-substantial, or total loss. Where harm to a designated heritage asset is less-than-substantial, it should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (para. 202).

Paragraph 203 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states the effect on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account when making decisions.

Opportunities should be sought for new development within conservation areas and the settings of heritage assets that enhances or better reveals their significance. (para. 206)

Referring to assets in a conservation area, NPPF para. 207 states that loss of an element that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area should be treated as either substantial (under para. 201) or less-than-substantial harm (under paragraph 202).

The former Copeland Borough Council’s Local Plan contains a number of relevant policies:

- Local Plan Policy ST1C(ii) highlights the importance of protecting, enhancing and restoring the Borough’s cultural and heritage features and their settings.
- ST1D emphasises the council’s commitment to creating and retaining quality places.
- ENV4A stresses the importance of protecting listed buildings, conservation areas and other features considered to be of historic, archaeological or cultural value.
- DM13D outlines the need, in converting non-residential buildings within settlement limits, or in subdividing large residential buildings within settlement limits, for conversion works to conserve the character of the building.
- DM27C outlines the restriction in principle of development within conservation areas to that which preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area.
- DM27D highlights the necessity of avoiding disrespectful alterations, substantial demolition, adverse effects on setting or views, or changes of use that harm the conservation or economic viability of a listed building.

Sammy Woodford

Conservation and Design Officer