

Application Number:	S/2011/0632		
Deadline	22/06/11		
Site Address:	The Manse Boar Street Mere Warminster BA126DD		
Proposal:	Remove rendering from south elevation, replace existing bricked up doorway and timber lintel with stone to match existing and re-point stone wall		
Applicant/ Agent:	Brimble, Lea & Partners		
Parish:	Mere		
Grid Reference:	381353.627 132359.188		
Type of Application:	LBC		
Conservation Area:	Mere	LB Grade:	II
Case Officer:	Mr Andrew Minting	Contact Number:	01722434734

**Reason for the application being considered by Committee:**

Cllr Jeans asked that the committee consider the application due to the level of public interest.

**1. Purpose of report**

To consider the above application and to recommend that Listed Building Consent be REFUSED subject to conditions.

**2. Report summary**

The main issues in the consideration of this application are as follows:

- Impact upon character of listed building

The application has generated no objections; support from Mere Parish Council; 6 letters of support from the public.

**3. Site Description**

The Manse is a grade II listed dwelling to the eastern end of the square in the centre of Mere, probably dating from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Built of rubble stone under a slate roof, it is a tall two-storey building with formally lined render to the south and west elevations to resemble ashlar stonework. Sash windows to the front elevation are framed with an architrave standing proud of the surrounding render.

Prior to submission of this application the applicant had intended to repair the render on the south and western elevations, and then paint in a soft colour. Having removed all of the render on the south side, they have decided that they would prefer to retain the exposed stonework, and have subsequently repointed it. The western elevation has been repaired and the plaster lined out as it had been historically.

**4. Relevant Planning History**

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
S/2010/0865	Remove defective rendering on south elevation and repoint existing stone wall  N.B. This was essentially the same proposal as in the current application, and was refused under delegated	REF

## **5. Proposal**

To leave the stonework of the southern elevation exposed, and repoint.

## **6. Planning Policy**

Local Plan: policies CN3

Government policy: PPS5

The site also lies within the Mere Conservation Area.

## **7. Consultations**

None

## **8. Publicity**

The application was advertised by site notice, press advert and neighbour consultation.

6 letters of letters of support received

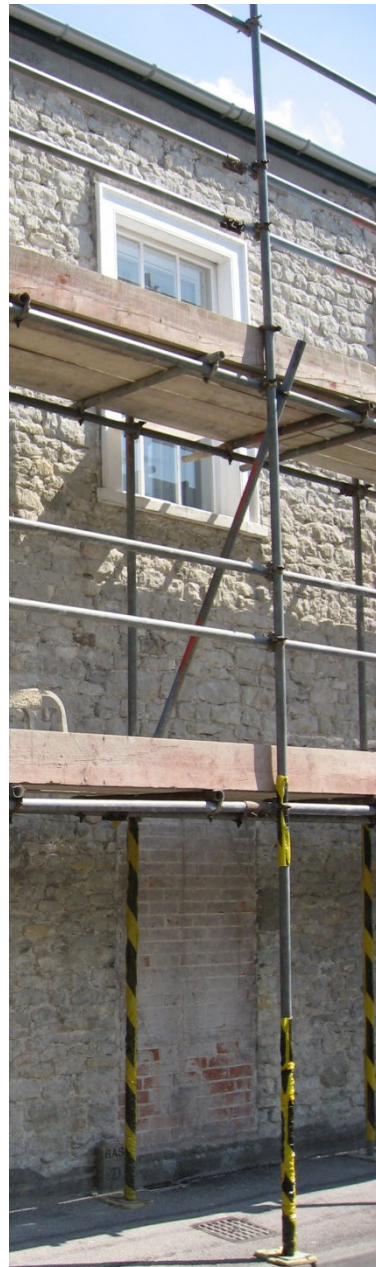
Summary of key relevant points raised:

Almost uniformly suggest that removal of the render is an improvement and that the building and conservation area are enhanced by the works, such that it 'blends perfectly with the other original buildings'.

## **9. Planning Considerations**

### ***9.1 Impact upon character of listed building***

The Manse, as its name suggests, was owned by the United Reformed Church in Mere from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is a tall and relatively formal building, standing out in the street scene for these features. The fenestration of the southern elevation suggests that there has been some historical rearrangement of the properties on the corner of the square, or possibly westward extension of the building, and the removal of the render has indeed shown a blocked up doorway to the west of the existing front door.



This doorway was blocked up with red bricks, possibly of circa 1900 Gillingham origin, and this is not referred to in the application; the applicant has removed these and replaced with some new non-matching stone.

The architrave of the windows, standing proud of the stonework, is a feature which would only be used where the walls were to be rendered; other houses in the vicinity, and of similar age, which have never been rendered, such as Hatherleigh (photo on file) show no such details; without the render, this detail looks out of place and inappropriate, as well as being a feature which will weather poorly. The single dressed stones at mid height either side of the windows, and the plain stone lintels, stand out as unusual details and were clearly never intended to be visible.

The condition of the stone, having had at least a century of protection from the weather, is extremely good, and indeed looks too good to have ever seen

the weather previously. The stone is, however, largely of very small rubble pieces, not dressed or coursed, and it presents a very different image from that of lined render; the latter, to look like finely dressed ashlar, gives an air of grandeur and formality, albeit by pretence, to this house which had a social status through its association with the church, and is a feature generally considered significant in the design and/or historical development of a building and desirable to be retained, even when the render itself needs replacing. This is a building which is unusual for being rendered historically, and its retention to show its distinction is important.

The repointing, as now executed, is poorly finished and should probably have been brushed back much further to draw less attention to itself.

## **10. Conclusion**

The removal of the lined render finish would fail to preserve the high relative status of this building, and its distinction from other properties in the vicinity. Removal of the render will without doubt cause the stone to begin deteriorating more quickly, and the unnecessary interference with the historic blocked doorway, illustrated above, introduces both inappropriate material and causes further harm to the legibility of the historical evolution of the building, contrary to all guidance in respect of the historic environment.

## **11. Recommendation**

**Listed Building Consent be REFUSED for the following reason:**

The works, including the loss of historic fabric from the doorway, and the removal of the lined render and the weather protection and formal image it provided, are considered to have an adverse impact on the significance of the listed building, and are therefore contrary to saved policy CN3 of the Salisbury District Local Plan (Adopted 2003) and PPS5.