

Date of Meeting	11 June 2014
Application Number	13/06783/LBC
Site Address	Boreham Road, Warminster, BA12 9HE
Proposal	Relocation of Grade II Listed Milestone to facilitate the construction of a junction serving the proposed adjacent residential development. (Resubmission of 13/04282/LBC)
Applicant	HPH Ltd & Hab Housing Limited
Town/Parish Council	WARMINSTER
Ward	WARMINSTER EAST
Grid Ref	389030 144268
Type of application	Listed Building Consent
Case Officer	Peter Horton

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

The application has been called in to committee at the request of the Division Member, Cllr. Andrew Davis to allow Members to consider the case in conjunction with application reference 13/06782/OUT (which is itemised separately on this committee agenda).

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the recommendation that listed building consent be granted.

2. Report Summary

The main issue to consider is the impact on the heritage asset – and to determine whether moving the listed milestone would be physically harmful to it, and whether moving it to a new location would undermine its historical integrity or setting.

3. Site Description

The application concerns a grade II listed milestone which is located on the southern side of Boreham Road, about 65m west of its junction with Bishopstrow Road. This location is on the eastern edge of Warminster. The milestone dates from around 1830 and is constructed of cast iron, containing the lettering SALISBURY 20 WARMINSTER 1. However the numeral 1 is currently obscured by turf and grass.

4. Planning History

An identical application was withdrawn in October 2013 (ref. 13/04282/LBC).

5. The Proposal

Listed building consent is sought for the relocation of the milestone to the opposite side of Boreham Road in order to facilitate the construction of a junction which would serve the proposed 35 houses covered by outline application reference 13/06782/OUT.

6. Planning Policy

The Emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy – Core Policy 58 Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment.

National planning policy on conserving and enhancing the historic environment is set out in Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

7. Consultations

Warminster Town Council - Supports the application.

English Heritage - No objection and welcomes the proposed works to refurbish the milestone marker. A Conservation Management Plan is recommended through a planning condition to ensure its future maintenance and repairs are properly managed. The application should be assessed against national and local plan policy and advice provided by the Council's Conservation officer.

Wiltshire Council Conservation Officer - No objection. The relocation of this milestone to the opposite side of the road accords with point 3 of the hierarchy for the siting of historic milestones produced by the Milestone Society. As this milestone would still make functional sense on the opposite side of the road, there would be no harm to its functional character.

Its historic character and fabric would be enhanced through the proposed sensitive refurbishment scheme. It is furthermore asserted that the location would be more visible to the public due to the difference in surrounding vegetation.

The following planning conditions are recommended:

- A schedule of repair works to the milestone be submitted and approved.
- A schedule to cover the careful transportation and secure storage of the milestone during the works.
- A timescale condition to ensure the milestone is brought back and installed at the proposed location as soon as it is repaired (e.g. within one month of the completion of the repairs, the milestone shall be installed at the approved location).

The reason for the timescale condition is that the milestone should not be off site for longer than necessary. The Design and Access Statement states that it would be off site for the 'duration of the works', it is not clear whether they mean the duration of the milestone repair works (which would be acceptable) or the duration of implementing the wider works associated to the construction of 35 houses and ancillary infrastructure (which is covered by application 13/067682/OUT) – a lengthier timescale which officers consider to be unacceptable).

County Archaeologist – No objections/comments.

8. Publicity

8 objections have been received from local residents. Their main concerns can be summarised as follows:

- There is a functional and historic reason for the siting of the milestone. To relocate it would degrade its authenticity and historic value;
- The marker is recorded within the 1987 book publication: "The Wiltshire Foundry, Warminster" as dating back to 1830. It is maintained on a local voluntary basis (with the express consent of Warminster Town Council). Its survival (unlike many others) is said to be due to its ideal location set back from the road (reduced risk of damage) and within yards of a tree;
- Relocating the milestone marker to the opposite side of the road would increase its exposure to risk of damage caused by vehicles straying from the highway, mowing machines, vandalism and possibly theft (like other milestone markers);
- It is an important and historic landmark - moving it for personal "greed" amounts to "commercial vandalism";
- Does local opinion not count? No support is voiced for this proposal
- One representation, whilst against the proposal, submits that there may not be a justified planning reason to refuse this application.
- The milestone is in remarkably good condition. By moving it there is risk of damaging it since the iron work of this date is very brittle and deeply buried in the ground. Disturbing it may result in irreparable damage.

9. Planning Considerations

The Impact on the Heritage Asset

9.1 The milestone is currently located within the site of a proposed new access road which would serve a proposed residential development of 35 houses. The site of the access is the highway authority's preferred location for it, so if the residential development (covered by application 13/06782/OUT) is found to be acceptable by Members and goes ahead, the milestone will need to be moved.

9.2 The Milestone Society Policy Note 1 outlines a positional hierarchy for milestones. Obviously the preferred location for a milestone is its precise original position (position number 1 out of 9 positions within the hierarchy). Position number 2 within the hierarchy is at the earliest recorded map reference and position number 3 is "on the opposite side of the road to these positions if it is safer and more visible". The proposed relocation of this particular milestone accords with position number 3 out of 9 in the hierarchy.

9.3 The milestone cannot be kept in its current (and original) position if the residential development is to go ahead due to the location of the proposed new junction. As such, points 1 and 2 of the hierarchy cannot be met. But to relocate it behind the pavement on the opposite side of the road to its existing position accords with position number 3 in the hierarchy and is the next best option.

9.4 The proposed location, being directly opposite the existing position and in such close proximity to it, would not materially harm the historic integrity or setting of the milestone. English Heritage and the Council's Conservation Officer are both comfortable with the proposed relocation. Their suggested conditions (which are referenced in section 7 above) would ensure that the milestone is refurbished and protected in the course of its relocation. The milestone would also be somewhat more visible than where it is now, due to there being

less of a backdrop of mature vegetation, whilst the relocation offers the prospect of the currently obscured numeral 1 in WARMINSTER 1 being revealed again, as it originally was.

10. Conclusion

On the basis of the above, officers submit that the proposed relocation of the milestone to an alternative location so close to the existing position would not harm the historic integrity or potential enjoyment of this heritage asset. Furthermore, the proposal offers the chance for the milestone to be refurbished and for it to display its original inscription in full view.

RECOMMENDATION: To grant consent, subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The works for which Listed Building Consent is hereby granted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The milestone shall not be removed from its existing location until a schedule of refurbishment works have been submitted to and agreed in writing with the local planning authority. The schedule shall detail the careful transportation and secure storage of the milestone during the course of these works. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: In the interests of preserving the physical fabric and historical integrity of this heritage asset.

- 3 The milestone shall be relocated to the approved new location within one calendar month of the completion of its refurbishment.

REASON: To minimise the amount of time in which the heritage asset is not on public view and in the interests of good conservation planning.

- 4 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: IMA-13-071 002A, IMA-13-071 004C and IMA-13-071 005

REASON: To define the terms of the consent hereby granted and in the interests of good conservation planning.