



**Lake District
National Park**

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**Report from the Head of Development Management to the
Development Control Committee**

Application number:	7/2025/5310
Application type:	Full Planning application
Applicant:	Mr Stephen Wilson, Wiltel Limited
Location:	Laurel Cottage Guest House, St. Martins Square, Bowness-on-Windermere, LA23 3EF
Grid reference:	340331 496849
Proposal:	Change of use of part of guest house (C1) to bar/drinking establishment and associated refurbishment works
Report prepared by:	Chris Kempster, Planner
Report agreed by:	Neil Henderson, Planning Manager
Recommendation:	APPROVE with conditions

1 About this report

- 1.1 The case planner has prepared this report, assessment and recommendation taking into account our policies (known as the Development Plan), written representations we have received, and any other material considerations.
- 1.2 Material considerations are things that are relevant to our decision making and which we are able to take into account – for example site specific factors, or Government planning policy (the National Planning Policy Framework) and Government planning guidance (the National Planning Practice Guidance).
- 1.3 The Development Control Committee will determine the application at its meeting having regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, representations we have received, and all other material considerations,

following a verbal and visual summary of the application by the case planner and, where applicable, after hearing any verbal representations made in accordance with our Policy for Public Speaking at Meetings.

- 1.4 Most applications are decided under powers delegated to the Head of Development Management. A small number of significant or more contentious applications are considered by our Development Control Committee as set out in our Scheme of Delegation.

2 Background and proposals

- 2.1 I am reporting this application to Committee because my recommendation of approval is contrary to Windermere and Bowness Town Council's recommendation of refusal and we have previously refused a very similar application under delegated powers.
- 2.2 The application relates to Laurel Cottage Guest House, a grade II listed building in the centre of Bowness on the junction between Brantfell Road and St Martins Place. The property lies within and contributes to the character of the Bowness Conservation Area. Planning permission is sought to change the use of the building into a bar/drinking establishment.
- 2.3 A separate listed building application has been submitted for the internal works (7/2025/5311). Matters relating solely to the impact on the listed building are covered in the officer's report on that application.
- 2.4 A planning application (7/2024/5475) was refused last year for the 'Change of use of part of guest house (C1) to bar/drinking establishment and associated refurbishment works' for the following reason:

Representations received from Cumbria Constabulary identify that licensed premises in Bowness are placing a significant strain on limited local policing resources and are contributing to the increase in recorded crime in the area. Analysis of this by their local team demonstrates a high proportion of offences have occurred within licensed premises or related to persons who had been patrons immediately before.

The use of the application building as a drinking establishment would introduce a capacity that far exceeds the existing small bar within the guesthouse which is in the context of the existing use. No details have been submitted that set out how the premises would be managed, its expected capacity or how any potential associated anti-social impacts or impacts on the amenities of neighbours would be minimised.

The application has failed to demonstrate that it would not result in an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbours or that it would not contribute to crime and disorder and the fear of crime, which undermine quality of life and community cohesion in conflict with Policy 06 (Design and development) of the Lake District National Park Local Plan 2020-2035 and the NPPF

3 Consultee responses

3.1 Windermere and Bowness Town Council – Recommend refusal.

'In terms of character and appearance, the development is sympathetic and well thought out. The proposed restoration of this historic building is a sympathetic design but the change of use to a public bar which would provide capacity for 88 people, far exceeding the capacity of the existing small bar, is problematic.

We recognise the efforts of the licensee to manage the nature of the establishment but plans and attitudes can change. This change of use would introduce another public house in the heart of Bowness where there are numerous others and, given that there are already strong linkages between the increasing number of licensed premises in Bowness with crime and disorder - as reported by Cumbria Constabulary in the previous application- this is something we can't ignore.

Anti-social behaviour in the nighttime economy of Bowness remains a serious problem. WBTC have reinstated their Street Support officers for the summer, where security guards patrol the streets on busy summer evenings. We attach a summary of the incident reports from last summer demonstrating the scale of alcohol related incidents. Data gathered so far this year indicates that it is a continuing problem. The Westmorland & Furness Council Welfare Hub runs every weekend and Cumbria Constabulary Operation Regulate has dedicated high visibility patrols taking place in Bowness on Friday and Saturday Nights with specific tasking around licensed premises. This is supplemented further by dedicated foot patrols for Operation Enhance.

This application is for a bar seating 88 customers. Which is a significant number of additional drinkers to the current offering in Bowness especially compared to the small number served by the previous guest house. The impact of an additional licensed premises on the crime and disorder of the area is a material consideration for planning purposes. Although the stated/current plans are to attract a more mature clientele, this can change. Ultimately this would be another public house in the heart of Bowness surrounded by numerous other drinking establishments which we feel, is a bar too far. As such we recommend refusal of the change of use.

The UNESCO World Heritage Site listing of Outstanding Universal Values for the Lake District states: "The primary aims in the Lake District have traditionally been, and continue to be, to maintain the scenic and harmonious beauty of the cultural landscape; to support and maintain traditional agro-pastoral farming; and to provide access and opportunities for people to enjoy the special qualities of the area." Those special qualities are becoming hard to enjoy in Bowness due to the density of licensed premises. The listing goes on to state, "The attributes of Outstanding Universal Value are in generally good condition. Risks affecting the site include ... development pressures from tourism. These risks are managed ... through a comprehensive system of development management administered by the National Park Authority." This is an opportunity for the

LDNPA to defend those OUVs and to preserve the special qualities of Bowness’.

- 3.2 The Designing Out Crime Officer of Cumbria Constabulary has made a lengthy response to the application but does not object to the application. His full comments are available on our website but in summary they refer to their comments on the previous application and go onto to say that following the previous refusal the applicant met with a local Police Inspector and the licencing officer (the “LO”) to discuss the application, the potential impact on the local community, and to outline the proposed business model and management procedures.

The Constabulary response notes that the licencing officer subsequently wrote to the applicant as follows:

“It is important to note that there is already a Premises Licence in respect of the premises. This premises licence currently authorises the supply of alcohol on the premises to the public 24 hours a day, every day of the week. There are currently no Annex 2 conditions to offer any mitigation to the significant risks which are posed by such a broad licence to supply alcohol. Following our meeting you have confirmed that you will vary the current licence in respect of the supply of alcohol. You are proposing supply of alcohol to be restricted to 1100 to 0100 hours, 7 days a week, but with the intention of ordinarily operating 1500 to 2300 hours midweek and until midnight weekends. I would welcome this variation and would be satisfied that this would pose significantly lower risk in terms of crime and disorder than the licence as it stands.”

The Designing Out Crime Officer goes on to state that

I have been made aware that since our original concerns regarding Laurel Cottage were raised (September 2024), three other premises in Bowness have been granted alcohol Licences, independently of a Planning Application.

Accordingly, Inspector Woods takes the view that ‘objecting’ to this planning application can no longer be reasonably justified when additional premises are undertaking Licensable Activities in the vicinity:

“This remains a sensitive issue for the local community. Whilst I remain very concerned about the density and capacity of licensed premises in Bowness and the subsequent impact on crime and ASB, I believe that if our (Licensing Act 2003) recommendations (for this venue) are implemented and maintained every reasonable step will have been taken to mitigate this. It is for others to determine whether an additional licensed premises is appropriate for the area... Reference our previous comment regarding Cumulative Impact Assessments Our primary role is to ensure that it is as well managed as possible, and that the licensee is accountable for any failures to maintain good order.

I agree with all of the recommendations made by PS Hunter which includes a number of clarifications and changes. A prime example being specific

hours of operation/licensing as opposed to the retention of a 24hr license which was granted when the premises was being used very differently. I am confident that the Licensing Officers at Westmorland and Furness Council are supportive of our approach and expectations.”

I trust this response explains the Constabulary’s revised position regarding this application.

3.3 Westmorland and Furness Council as the Local Highway Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority has no objection to the proposed development as it is considered that it will not have a material effect on existing highway conditions nor will it increase the flood risk on the site or elsewhere’.

3.4 Historic England has no comment.

4 Representations

4.1 Seven letters of support and three letters of objection have been received raising the following comments for consideration:

Support

- The current guesthouse has a 24-hour alcohol licence. I believe the owners have agreed new opening hours and therefore this application should be supported to bring it in line with other licenced premises in the area.
- The development aligns well with the vision of fostering a vibrant and sustainable local economy. It has the potential to benefit both residents and visitors.
- The development would provide jobs for local people.
- The current building has been empty and in need of redevelopment for some time. This seems like a good opportunity to redevelop it.
- The current owners have a good track record with other pubs/bars within the local area.
- The proposed development would take some of the demand within the local area and ease the pressure on other bars/pubs.

Objection

- Noise pollution created by visitors and from music from the premises causing harm to nearby residents.
- Antisocial behaviour from visitors to the premises adding to the existing antisocial behaviour in the area.
- Highway safety harm resulting in visitors parking on nearby streets and blocking the pavements, and from delivery lorries.
- No easy access for disabled visitors to use the toilet.
- The proposed bar would allow more people to visit the premises, with more seating outside. This would lead to a greater level of noise, especially at night, and lead to more antisocial behaviour.

5 Development plan policies and other relevant guidance

- 5.1 The relevant Development Plan comprises:
- The Lake District National Park Local Plan 2020-2035
- 5.2 The following Lake District National Park Local Plan policies are relevant to this application:
- Policy 01: National and international significance of the Lake District
 - Policy 02: Spatial strategy
 - Policy 05: Protecting the spectacular landscape
 - Policy 06: Design and development
 - Policy 07: Historic environment
 - Policy 17: Retailing and town centres
 - Policy 18: Sustainable tourism and holiday accommodation
- 5.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

6 Main issues and assessment

- 6.1 The main issues in this assessment are:
- Principle of development
 - Crime and anti-social behaviour
 - Residential Amenity
 - Impact on the character and appearance of the building and the Bowness Conservation Area
 - Highways and access

Principle of development

- 6.2 The application seeks to change the use of an existing guest house into a drinking establishment.
- 6.3 In terms of the loss of a guest house, Policy 18 seeks to retain and evolve a range of high-quality holiday accommodation. Policy 18 will only support the change of use of holiday accommodation to other uses where it can be demonstrated there is no demand for it resulting from an appropriate marketing exercise and other evidence.
- 6.4 No evidence of a marketing exercise has been provided with this application. The purpose of the marketing exercise however is to provide evidence to demonstrate that the proposal would not create a shortage of guest houses in the locality, as the policy seeks to maintain a range of visitor accommodation types in the area. Given the rural service centre location and the self-evident wide variety of tourism accommodation in the vicinity including many guesthouses, the loss of this guesthouse would not result in a detrimental impact on the range of visitor accommodation types in the area. I am satisfied that it would not be reasonable to require a

marketing exercise as the requirements of development plan policy are already met.

- 6.5 There is development plan support for a drinking establishment use in this location. Policy 02 states that Rural Service Centres such as Windermere/Bowness will be the focus for housing, employment and retail development. The application building is located within the Bowness Primary Shopping Area. Policy 17 sets out that in the Primary Shopping Areas of Ambleside, Bowness, Keswick, and Windermere we will support commercial, business and service uses where proposals maintain and enhance the vitality of these centres.
- 6.6 The glossary of the NPPF sets out that pubs and bars should be considered main town centre uses. The NPPF also supports the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, including public houses.
- 6.7 I am therefore satisfied that in principle the change of use proposed is in accordance with Local Plan Policies 01, 02, 17 and 18 and the NPPF.

Crime and anti-social behaviour

- 6.8 The main concern of objectors and the Town Council is that the introduction of a further drinking establishment will add to existing impacts resulting from anti-social behaviour linked, as they see it, to an overabundance of drinking establishments in Bowness.
- 6.9 An application of this nature straddles both the planning and licensing regimes and involves input from a range of statutory consultees. The applicants would separately need to seek a new or amended license for the use of the premises. Though other controls exist, these measures by their nature are reactive. The planning system takes a precautionary approach, considering whether the use in the first instance is inherently likely to cause unacceptable impacts. Equally, applications should not be refused on the assumption that other regulatory regimes will fail to perform their function adequately.
- 6.10 Policy 06 outlines that development must create safe and accessible environments, and which ensures development is not vulnerable to crime. The NPPF requires that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion.
- 6.11 It is undoubtedly the case that a high proportion of anti-social behaviour and public disorder offences occur within licensed premises or relate to persons who had been patrons of such premises immediately before. I do not consider however that this link between alcohol consumption and crime and disorder is unique to Bowness.
- 6.12 As indicated above, pubs and bars are an established town centre use, and there is no support in development plan policy for restricting the number of

licensed premises in our Town Centres. It follows that in order to conclude that this application should be refused we need to identify what is particular to this proposal which would be more likely than not lead to unacceptable impacts. If we are unable to, then there are limited grounds to recommend refusal.

- 6.13 The premises currently has a guest house use which contains a small bar area together with space for dining on the ground floor with bedrooms on the first floor. The premises has a licence which enables members of the public to use the bar as well as guests. The proposal would extend the bar area across both floors and remove the guest bedrooms, increasing the capacity well beyond that which currently exist, as the Town Council points out. Laurel Cottage is not however a particularly large property so in the context of existing capacity for Bowness as a whole I do not consider that the additional numbers would be significant. I am also conscious that the vast majority of those enjoying a drink do not indulge in excessive drinking or anti-social behaviour, so of those extra numbers few are likely to cause a nuisance.
- 6.14 The previous application was refused largely due to the concerns expressed by Cumbria Constabulary. Between the determination of the previous application and the submission of this application, it appears that there have been productive discussions between the applicant, the licensing authority and the Constabulary. Critically it has been pointed out that the current premises is already licenced 24 hours a day. The local Police Inspector has commented that providing that their recommendations are implemented and maintained, every reasonable step will have been taken to mitigate the impact on crime and anti-social behaviour. As a result, the Police objection has been withdrawn.
- 6.15 The withdrawal of the police objection is partly because they are satisfied that the proposed licensee intends to operate in a responsible matter. The licensing objectives are: prevention of crime and disorder; public safety; prevention of public nuisance; protection of children from harm. While the grant of planning permission is not personal to the applicant, if the police consider that the proposal is acceptable and given the strong alignment between the police concerns and licensing objectives, subject to appropriate licencing conditions then there is no reason why we should take a different position.
- 6.16 In the absence of either a policy which seeks to restrict the numbers of licenced premises, any particular issues with the nature of the premises which would be more likely to lead to problems, or an objection from the police I do not consider that it would be reasonable to refuse the application on the grounds of the impact on crime and disorder. To do so, would effectively apply a blanket ban to any applications for new drinking establishments in Bowness. While that would be welcome to some residents such matters should be dealt with through the planning policy process rather than on an individual application basis. I am therefore unable to conclude that the additional licenced premises proposed would have an unacceptable impact on terms of crime and disorder within the locality.

Impact on amenity of neighbours

- 6.17 Policy 06 requires that development not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of adjoining residents and users of the proposed development, due to visual intrusion, overlooking, overshadowing, overbearing effect, noise, light pollution or other adverse impacts.
- 6.18 The surrounding area is, as might be expected in this town centre location, dominated by commercial properties including restaurants, shops and bars. The closest houses are 1 to 7 Wordsworth Court to the east, separated from the rear of Laurel Cottage by an access road, at a distance of around 10m. These properties were converted from a school building and occupancy is unrestricted. The agent claims that they are used for holiday accommodation. It is certainly the case that some of these properties are used for holiday letting but I have been unable to confirm one way or another whether they all are. For the purposes of this assessment I will assume that as occupancy is unrestricted there is no reason why they could not be permanently occupied, howsoever they are currently used.
- 6.19 A recent permission (7/2024/5211) has also permitted the conversion of the adjoining property to the north from a guest house into staff accommodation.
- 6.20 I consider that there would be an inevitable increase in noise and movement in and out of the property as a result of the change of use, however we have to consider this in the context of Laurel Cottage being within the Primary Shopping Centre area. Those choosing to live in such areas would be well aware that there is likely to be more activity in the evening compared to an exclusively residential location or suburban or rural areas. Indeed some people make an active choice to live in more lively locations.
- 6.21 The public outdoor space for the bar is limited in size and situated to the front of the property adjacent to Kendal Road and shielded from Wordsworth Court by the application building. I do not think that outside patrons are likely to impact on residents of Wordsworth Court through excessive noise. Noise generated from inside the premises will be contained to a degree but inevitably there will be some noise leakage.
- 6.22 The recently approved staff accommodation is immediately above another bar, so I do not consider that the proposed use of Laurel Cottage is likely to significantly increase the impact on those occupants beyond the existing.
- 6.23 In the absence of any site-specific factors which would result in excessive impacts on specified residential properties, I do not consider it reasonable to refuse an application for a change of use in a main town centre location to a use that is identified in the NPPF as being appropriate in such locations.

Impact on the character and appearance of the building and the Bowness Conservation Area

- 6.24 Policy 06 requires that development reinforce the importance of local character by having regard to scale, height, density, layout, appearance and materials.
- 6.25 Conservation Areas are designated heritage assets by virtue of the NPPF. Policy 07 outlines that we will seek to conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets, including the character, authenticity, integrity, setting and views of the historic environment. This test is derived from the legal requirements of local planning authorities in respect of conservation areas as set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 6.26 External works to the building are limited. The main change sought is the introduction of metal railings to the front, set behind the stone boundary wall. The alteration is considered acceptable for the context and would act to preserve the character of the conservation area and setting of the listed building. Internal alterations do not require planning permission but as the building is listed those changes are addressed in the parallel listed building consent application report.
- 6.27 The Town Council has also raised concerns that the addition of another licenced premises would harm the character of the area. While I understand that no one want to see loutish behaviour it is hard to conclude that the character of the area would be changed in any meaningful way, given that this part of the Conservation Area is described in the Conservation Area Appraisal as "*principally a shopping area but also contains pubs, cafes and restaurants*".
- 6.28 I am satisfied that the development is acceptable in terms of their impact on the character and appearance of the area and satisfies the requirements of Local Plan Policies 01, 02, 06, 07 and the NPPF.

Highways and access

- 6.29 Concerns have been raised that the use would result in increased parking on the roads surrounding the premises, leading to impacts on the highway. The Local Highway Authority have raised no objections to the application as they consider the proposals would not impact on local highway conditions. The proposed use of the building is suitable within a town centre and there is on-street parking bays and public car parks within close walking distance.
- 6.30 Those parts of the road network where parking would be detrimental to highway safety are delineated accordingly with double or single yellow lines as appropriate. Managing parking on yellow lines falls under a separate control mechanism from the planning system and steps would be able to be taken should this occur.
- 6.31 I am therefore satisfied that the proposals would not have an adverse impact on local highway conditions.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The previous application was refused largely on the grounds of a perceived risk of increased antisocial and criminal behaviour. The Town Council in particular has concerns about the current situation and fear that the cumulative impact of another drinking establishment would exacerbate those impacts. However, there is no policy support for refusing uses identified as Main Town Centre Uses in a town centre location in principle. Unacceptable site specific impacts have not been identified. Given the withdrawal of the police objection, I consider that the previous reason for refusal of the previous application can no longer be sustained.
- 7.2 Having regard to the provisions of the development plan, in particular Lake District National Park Local Plan Policies 01, 02, 06, 07, 17 and 18 the Design Code SPD and other material considerations (including the provisions of the NPPF), the development is considered to be acceptable, subject to the conditions recommended.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE with conditions

Conditions/Reasons

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of THREE years from the date hereof.
- REASON: Imposed in accordance with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in conformity with the following submitted plans and details:
- Site Location Plan and Site Plan drawing number 791-10 Rev A
 - Proposed Elevations and Boundary Wall Details, drawing number 791-021 Rev B
 - Proposed Floor Plans, drawing number 791-020 Rev B
 - Proposed Sections drawing number 791-022 Rev B
 - Proposed Sash Window Details, drawing number 791-025 Rev B
 - Planning Statement prepared by Steven Abbott Associates LLP, dated May 2025
 - Design, Access & Heritage Statement prepared by Alston and Donnelly Architecture Limited, dated 18.02.25
 - Heritage Impact Assessment, prepared by HCUK Group, dated April 2025
- REASON: For the avoidance of doubt.
- 3 The slate stone flags to the front of Laurel Cottage shall be of a local slate, that is slates which have been mined or quarried in Cumbria, and retained as such.
- REASON: To safeguard the character and appearance of this listed building in accordance with Policy 07 of the Lake District National Park Local Plan 2020-2035.

NPPF decision notice requirements

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 Article 35(2) statement.

The Local Planning Authority did not identify problems arising in relation to dealing with the application.

Background papers

Background papers are available for inspection on the planning application file unless otherwise specified on that file as confidential by reasons of financial/personal circumstances in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.



**Lake District
National Park**

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**Report from the Head of Development Management to the
Development Control Committee**

Application number:	7/2025/5311
Application type:	Listed Building Consent application
Applicant:	Mr Stephen Wilson, Wiltel Limited
Location:	Laurel Cottage Guest House, St. Martins Square, Bowness-on-Windermere, LA23 3EF
Grid reference:	340331 496849
Proposal:	Change of use of part of guest house (C1) to bar/drinking establishment and associated refurbishment works
Report prepared by:	Chris Kempster, Planner
Report agreed by:	Neil Henderson, Planning Manager
Recommendation:	GRANT Listed Building Consent

1 About this report

- 1.1 The case planner has prepared this report, assessment and recommendation taking into account our policies (known as the Development Plan), written representations we have received, and any other material considerations.
- 1.2 Material considerations are things that are relevant to our decision making and which we are able to take into account – for example site specific factors, or Government planning policy (the National Planning Policy Framework) and Government planning guidance (the National Planning Practice Guidance).
- 1.3 The Development Control Committee will determine the application at its meeting having regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, representations we have received, and all other material considerations,

following a verbal and visual summary of the application by the case planner and, where applicable, after hearing any verbal representations made in accordance with our Policy for Public Speaking at Meetings.

- 1.4 Most applications are decided under powers delegated to the Head of Development Management. A small number of significant or more contentious applications are considered by our Development Control Committee as set out in our Scheme of Delegation.

2 Background and proposals

- 2.1 I am reporting this application to Committee because my recommendation of approval is contrary to Windermere and Bowness Town Council's recommendation of refusal.

- 2.2 The application relates to Laurel Cottage, a grade II listed building in the centre of Bowness and within the Bowness Conservation Area.

- 2.3 This application seeks listed building consent for:

- Removal of stones to the top of the boundary wall to the front of the building and replacement with metal railings to be of a similar design to historic railings which were present on the wall.
- Remove artificial grass and lay local slate flags to the front of the building.
- Replacement of the Acrylic sign over the entrance door with a new hardwood sign. A separate signage application will be submitted for this.
- New external lighting to replace existing external lighting.
- Replacement of four timber sash windows in the rear elevation with four double glazed timber sash windows of a similar design and opening mechanism. Repair other existing windows within the building.
- The existing modern Polycarbonate low-pitched roof on the rear elevation is to be replaced with a new Black PPC metal standing seam roof.
- New rear timber door to replace the existing.
- Internally it is proposed to retain much of the historic fabric, and remove the modern interventions. This is explained in detail in the Design and Access Statement.

- 2.5 The previous Listed Building Consent application (7/2024/5476) was refused as the proposals failed to preserve the significance of the listed building. This application has been amended to make the following changes:

- The cobbles to the front are no longer being lifted and re-laid. No change is proposed to the cobbles.
- The internal layout is being retained to allow the history of the building to be read.

- The interior would not be tanked but instead have the damaged Lime render removed and re-rendered to match, to remedy the water ingress issue.

3 Consultations

- 3.1 Windermere and Bowness Town Council made a single response covering both the listed building consent and planning applications recommending refusal. Their major concern is to do with the impacts of the change of use on the surrounding area, rather than the physical works to the listed building.
- 3.2 The Town Council's full comments can be found on our website and the officers report on the accompanying planning application (7/2025/5310). Those parts of the comments relating to listed building consent matters are as follows:

'In terms of character and appearance, the development is sympathetic and well thought out. The proposed restoration of this historic building is a sympathetic design.'

- 3.2 Historic England – No comment.

4 Representations

- 4.1 Seven letters of support and three letters of objection have been received. As with the Town Council's comments, the matters raised are to do with the nature of the change of use rather than the works to the listed building and as such they are covered in the report relating to the accompanying planning application.

5 Development plan policies and other relevant guidance

- 5.1 The relevant Development Plan comprises:
- The Lake District National Park Local Plan 2020-2035
- 5.2 The following Lake District National Park Local Plan policy is relevant to this application:
- Policy 07: Historic environment
- 5.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

6 Main issues and assessment

- 6.1 The sole issue is the impact of the works on the significance of the listed building. Other matters are dealt with in the concurrent planning application, elsewhere on the agenda.

- 6.2 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant listed building consent 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 (Section 16 (2)).
- 6.3 Lake District National Park Local Plan 2020-2035 Policy 07: Historic environment states that development proposals will seek to conserve and enhance the character, authenticity, integrity, setting and views of the historic environment.
- 6.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The NPPF 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.
- 6.5 Paragraph 206 of the NPPF states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use (paragraph 208).

Heritage significance

- 6.6 Laurel Cottage is an attractive building of character occupying a prominent position on St Martin's Square in the centre of Bowness. The building dates back to the early-seventeenth century with later extensions and alterations. The earliest recorded use is as a schoolhouse but it also been used for residential and retail purposes before its current use as a guesthouse. Over the years the interior has undergone alterations responding to each use of the building.
- 6.7 The building derives much of its significance from its aesthetic value as an attractive building in a prominent position. Distinguishing features are the eight over eight sash windows and bays which evidence its age, reinforcing the historic character of the area. The building also holds historical and communal value deriving from its history as a school.

Impact on the significance of the listed building

- 6.8 Documentation has been provided to show that the stone wall to the front of the building historically had metal railings on top. These were removed and stones placed on top. It is proposed to reinstate metal railings on top of the wall. The metal railings would be painted black and would be less than 1m in height on top of the wall. The design of the railings is similar to the original, as seen in historic photos, and similar to the existing metal rails to the rear of the building.

- 6.9 The artificial grass would be replaced by local slate flags to create a seating area. I consider it would be reasonable and necessary to condition any approval so that flags were locally quarried slate.
- 6.10 The removal of the modern signage would cause no harm. The proposed sign would be hardwood and details of the new sign would be submitted within a new signage application.
- 6.11 The removal of the modern external lighting would cause no harm to the significance of the listed building. The proposed new lighting would be modest in scale and would preserve the aesthetic significance of the building.
- 6.12 All of the windows within the front elevation and side elevation are either proposed to be simply re-painted, or repaired and painted. Four of the windows within the rear elevation area proposed to be replaced. A condition survey has been prepared to illustrate that they are beyond repair. The proposed windows are timber sliding sash windows of a very similar design and the same opening mechanism. They are proposed to be heritage double glazing with through glazing bars. The rear of the building has less aesthetic significance than the front or the side elevation. As such, with the proposed heritage sash windows proposed being of a very similar style to the existing windows, and the fact that the rear elevation of the building is of a lower aesthetic significance, I consider the proposed replacement windows would preserve the aesthetic significance of the listed building.
- 6.13 The internal alterations proposed are explained in detail within the Design and Access Statement which accompanies the application. The alterations retain the majority of the historic fabric of the building, while retaining its internal layout. More modern additions are proposed to be removed and replaced, and heritage building techniques and materials are proposed. The building is in a poor state of repair and a new use of the building is required to maintain it into the future and allow people to appreciate the building. As such, repairs and minor alterations are required and I consider the proposed changes preserve the significance of the listed building and allow the building to be maintained and used into the future.
- 6.14 As such, I consider the proposed alterations would preserve the significance of the listed building, and would comply with Local Plan Policy 07 and the NPPF.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 Having regard to the provisions of the development plan, in particular Lake District National Park Local Plan Policy 07, the Design Code SPD and other material considerations (including the provisions of the NPPF), the development is considered to be acceptable, subject to the conditions recommended.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT Listed Building Consent

Conditions/Reasons

- 1 The works hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of THREE years from the date hereof.

REASON: Imposed in accordance with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

- 2 The works hereby granted consent shall not be carried out otherwise than in conformity with the following submitted plans and details:
 - Site Location Plan and Site Plan drawing number 791-10 Rev A
 - Proposed Elevations and Boundary Wall Details, drawing number 791-021 Rev B
 - Proposed Floor Plans, drawing number 791-020 Rev B
 - Proposed Sections drawing number 791-022 Rev B
 - Proposed Sash Window Details, drawing number 791-025 Rev B
 - Design, Access & Heritage Statement prepared by Alston and Donnelly Architecture Limited, dated 18.02.25
 - Heritage Impact Assessment, prepared by HCUK Group, dated April 2025

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt.

- 3 The slate stone flags to the front of Laurel Cottage shall be of a local slate, that is slates which have been mined or quarried in Cumbria, and retained as such.

REASON: To safeguard the character and appearance of this listed building in accordance with Policy 07 of the Lake District National Park Local Plan 2020-2035.

NPPF decision notice requirements

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 Article 35(2) statement.

The Local Planning Authority did not identify problems arising in relation to dealing with the application.

Background papers

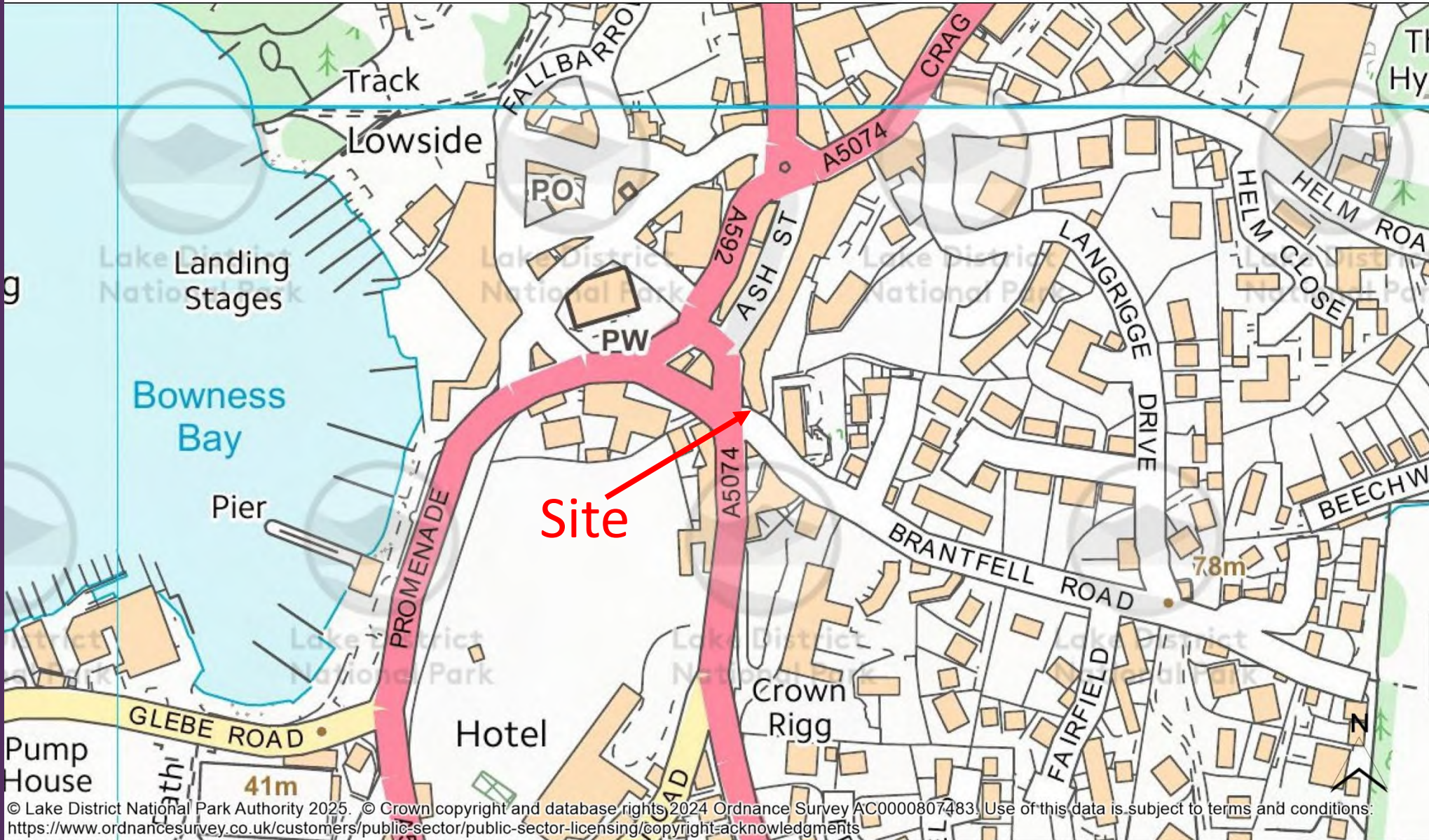
Background papers are available for inspection on the planning application file unless otherwise specified on that file as confidential by reasons of financial/personal circumstances in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

7/2025/5310 (Planning) & 5311 (LBC)

Laurel Cottage Guest House, St. Martins
Square, Bowness-On-Windermere,
Windermere, LA23 3EF

Change of use of part of guest house (C1) to
bar/drinking establishment and associated
refurbishment works

Location Plan 7/2025/5310



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Lake District
National Park Authority

Location Plan

Site



Front elevation of Laurel Cottage



Relationship between Laurel Cottage and Wordsworth Court

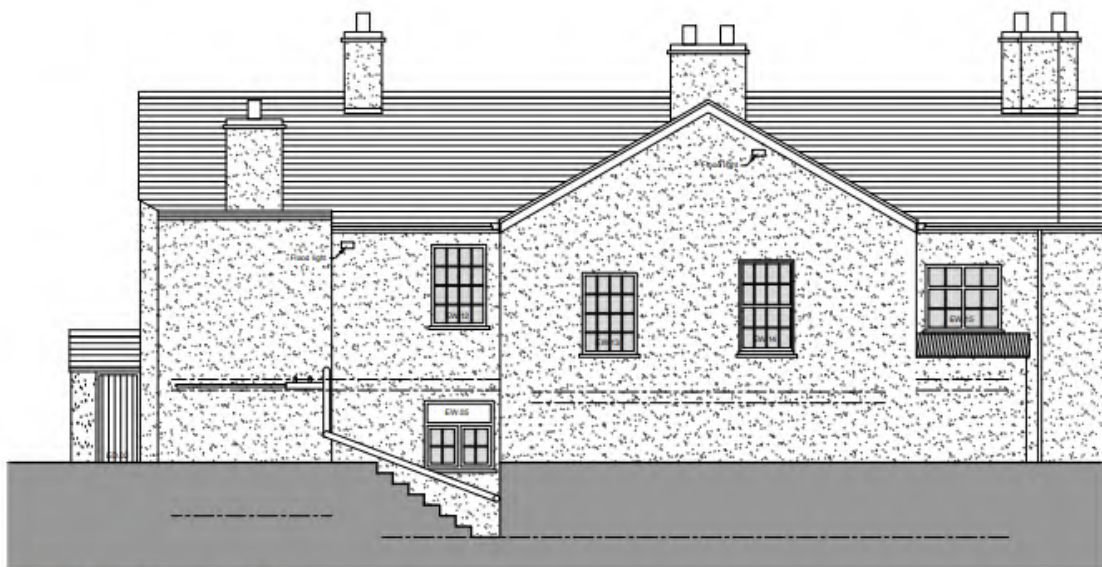




FRONT WEST ELEVATION - St Martins Place



SIDE SOUTH ELEVATION - Brantfell Road



REAR EAST ELEVATION



Existing Elevations



FRONT WEST ELEVATION - St Martins Place



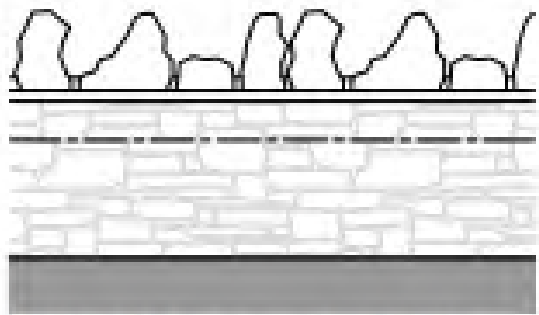
SIDE SOUTH ELEVATION - Brantfell Road



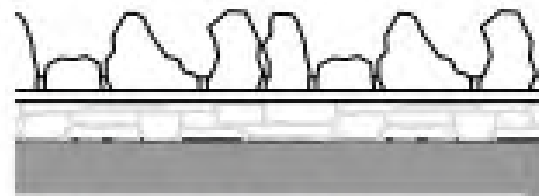
REAR EAST ELEVATION

Proposed Elevations

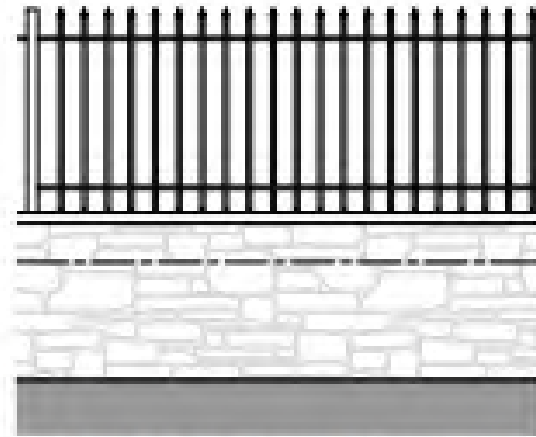
Proposed and existing wall elevations



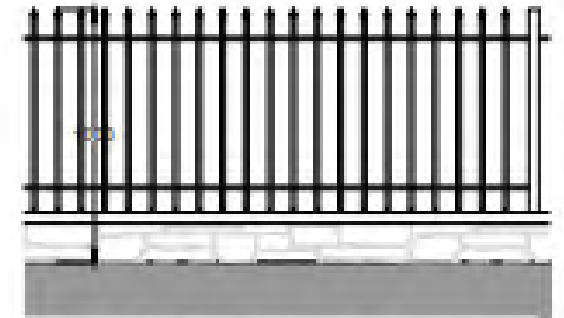
EXISTING - From Roadside



EXISTING - From Terrace



PROPOSED - From Roadside



PROPOSED - From Terrace

EXTERNAL WALL FRONT WEST ELEVATION



SCALE 1:25



Front elevation
of Laurel Cottage
as seen from
public views
from the road



Side elevation of Laurel Cottage as seen from public views from Brantfell road



Interior of Laurel Cottage

