

## **Conservation Officer comments for: 25/00423/LBC**

**Proposal: The removal and storage of the timber cupola on the courtyard tower and replacement with a temporary flat roof**

**Site: Stables And Kennels Rear Of Bradgate House, Bradgate Hill, Groby**

**Date Submitted: 17/06/2025**

This application seeks listed building consent for the removal and storage of the timber cupola structure on the courtyard tower of The Stables and Kennels to Bradgate House followed by replacement of the structure with a temporary flat roof.

### **Site context and significance**

The Stables and Kennels to the now demolished Bradgate House (from here on referred to as “Bradgate Stables”) are an outstanding example of a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century hunting lodge and stable block, built in a Jacobean style. Although in a ruinous state, the building still holds much architectural and historical value from which its significance is derived. This significance is recognised by its Grade II\* listing (National Heritage List England (NHLE) ref 1361383).

Due to its very bad condition and no long-term solution to resolve its at risk status the building is on Historic England’s Heritage At Risk Register. Due to a lack of voluntary action from current owner the Council has exercised their statutory powers and served notices in both 2022 and 2023 under Section 54 the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to ensure that the urgent works necessary for the preservation of the building are undertaken. The owner has voluntarily undertaken some vegetation clearance and urgent works to the west range of the building during 2024. Further works are proposed by the owner for the southern range, and to facilitate these works it is proposed to remove the timber cupola structure on the south tower. The removal of this structure would affect the special interest of the listed building and therefore consent is sought for these works

### **Relevant Acts, National and Local Policies and Guidance**

Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on the local planning authority when considering whether to grant listed building consent to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural and historic interest which it possesses.

Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the national policy on conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraphs 212-215 of the NPPF require great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets when considering the impact of a proposed development on its significance, for any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset to have clear and convincing justification, and for that harm to be weighed against the public benefits of a proposal.

The Planning Practice Guide (PPG) and Historic England Advice Note 2 (HEAN2) Making Changes to Heritage Assets sets out how the policies of the NPPF are expected to be applied and includes guidance on the conservation of and making changes to the historic environment.

Policies DM11 and DM12 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (SADMP) DPD seek to protect and enhance the historic environment and heritage assets. All proposals for extensions and alterations of listed buildings will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the proposals are compatible with the significance of the building.

### **The proposal and its impact upon the significance of affected heritage assets**

The proposal is for the removal of the timber cupola on the south tower to facilitate the carrying out of urgent works to the tower and its future maintenance. The cupola is in a state of decay and is considered by the applicant and the Conservation Accredited Structural Engineer appointed as Lead Advisor to the Borough Council to be past the point of repair in situ. In order to mitigate against any further damage to the tower through collapse of the cupola and allow for a safe access to the interior of the tower to undertake the urgent works, it is proposed to dismantle, remove, and store the cupola in a garage unit on the wider site. A temporary roof structure would then be installed over the south tower, allowing the internal fabric to dry out, thus improving protection of the tower and allowing future access for the removal of the now decayed scaffolding presently within the tower at completion of the urgent works.

A Works Strategy (within sections 2.0 and 3.0 of Schedule 1 of the submitted document 'Application for the Removal and Storage of the Timber Cupola on the Courtyard Tower and Replacement with a Temporary Flat Roof') has been prepared by the applicant and sets out the methodology for the undertaking of this proposal. The methodology is considered to be generally acceptable and should this application be approved then all works should be undertaken in accordance with the Works Strategy, with this being secured by a planning condition.

As the cupola is a key feature of heritage significance upon the listed building it should be recorded prior to and during its proposed dismantling, removal and storage on site. As per section 3.02 of Schedule 1 of the Works Strategy the cupola has been recorded and measured via laser scanning, with these outputs being satisfactorily deposited with the local planning authority, but record drawings with tagged members marked with accompanying photographs (as per sections 3.03 and 3.06 of Schedule 1 of the Works Strategy) are required to be issued to the local planning authority prior to the commencement of and during the dismantling of the cupola, as is practicable. Should the application be approved the proper recording of the cupola should be secured by a planning condition.

The proposed location for the storage of the cupola structure within a garage unit within the ownership of the applicant and close to the historic access drive to the Stables is considered to be appropriate.

Further details beyond the brief description in section 3.08 of Schedule 1 of the Works Strategy are required to ensure that the proposed temporary roof is appropriately specified. The details of the proposed roof will most likely be determined once the cupola has been removed and the area can be fully assessed, and a planning condition to secure these details is suggested.

The fundamental reasoning for this proposal is for the temporary removal of the cupola to allow for the undertaking of urgent works to the south tower, so once such works have been completed, it is the opinion of the local planning authority the

conservation objective should be that the cupola is reinstated to the tower within a reasonable timeframe, suggested as six months, which could be secured by a planning condition. Assessment will be required as to whether this objective is viable and practicable. Should alternative proposals to the reinstatement of the cupola be considered by the applicant it is suggested that they must be submitted to and agreed with the local planning with six months of the completion of the urgent works, with this requirement incorporated as an alternative option within the above planning condition.

### **Summary and conditions**

For the above reasons and subject to conditions it is considered that the proposed works would be compatible with the significance of the grade II\* listed building Stables and Kennels rear of Bradgate House and consequently the proposal would comply with Policies DM11 and DM12 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD, section 16 of the NPPF, and the statutory duty of Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The requested planning conditions are as follows:

That all works should be completed in accordance with the details contained within Sections 2.0 and 3.0 of Schedule 1 of the submitted Works Strategy, as contained within the document titled 'Application for the Removal and Storage of the Timber Cupola on the Courtyard Tower and Replacement with a Temporary Flat Roof'.

Reason: To preserve the special interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and in accordance with Policies DM11 and DM12 of the adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2016).

Prior to the dismantling of the cupola structure drawings of the elements of the cupola to be removed and practicably available for recording shall be produced to a recognised scale and submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. Drawings of all elements of the cupola to be removed shall be produced to a recognised scale and submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing within 14 days of completion of the dismantling. This recording process shall include details of the logging and tagging of all elements of the cupola to be dismantled and any supplementary images.

Reason: To allow for the proper recording of the cupola as a feature of heritage significance upon the listed building in accordance with Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and in accordance with Policies DM11, DM12 and DM13 of the adopted Site Allocations Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2016).

Prior to its installation details of the temporary roof to the south tower shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The installation of the temporary roof shall be carried out in full accordance with the details which shall include:

- A detailed drawing to a recognised scale of the temporary roof
- A specification of the temporary roof
- The method of temporary drainage from the temporary roof

Reason: To preserve the special interest of the listed building in accordance with Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and in accordance with Policies DM11 and DM12 of the adopted Site Allocations Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2016).

Upon completion of the urgent works to the south tower as summarised in Section 2.03 of Schedule 1 of the approved Works Strategy the cupola structure should be reinstated upon the listed building to its state prior to commencement of its dismantling with the reinstatement completed within 6 months from the final date of the completion of the urgent works, or alternative proposals for the preservation of the cupola structure must be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority within 6 months from the final date of the completion of the urgent works.

Reason: To preserve the cupola as a feature of heritage significance upon the listed building in accordance with Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and in accordance with Policies DM11 and DM12 of the adopted Site Allocations Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2016).