



Sebastian Payne &lt;bas.payne@gmail.com&gt;

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**Future use of Bowring Library, Moretonhampstead. Ref: PRE/0570/15**

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**Keith McKay** <kmckay@dartmoor.gov.uk>  
To: "bas.payne@gmail.com" <bas.payne@gmail.com>  
Cc: Jim Blackwell <jblackwell@dartmoor.gov.uk>

14 August 2015 at 15:53

Dear Bas,

Further to our site meeting at the Bowring Library last Monday 10th August to discuss the use and condition of the grade II listed building, the following matters have been clarified in consultation with the Planning Officer, Jim Blackwell.

The continued long established use of the building for business purposes including the library would be the best outcome in planning terms, especially for the community and this would be encouraged. Any change of use will require planning permission, and also the implications for the listed building especially from the point of view of building control would have the potential to impact on the significance of the designated heritage asset. Whilst building control will moderate their requirements in light of the listed building status, there could be potential for certain outcomes which may not be altogether beneficial. The original use for a listed building would always be considered the ideal future use in the long term for the property.

With regard to conversion to flats, Jim Blackwell notes that there would be a requirement for affordable units as part of any residential conversion of the building. Unfortunately, it would be difficult to achieve this form of housing. Having discussed the matter with our Forward Planning team, a housing association is unlikely to be interested (given the size), so I am not clear who would bring the site forward. There would also be particular challenges around making it an efficient building for residential use (and therefore affordable running costs), as well as other necessary alterations, balanced against both the costs and ability to make alterations to the fabric of the listed building. Further issues would be difficult to overcome, such as the interaction between a residential and library and/or office use, and the lack of external space would have an impact on parking, refuse storage and amenity space.

The condition of the external envelope of the building is fair and providing attention to outstanding maintenance issues occurs soon and is ongoing then overall the building will remain sound and contribute significantly to the quality of the Moretonhampstead conservation area. With regard to lining of cast iron rainwater downpipes embedded in masonry walls, if details of the technique and materials can be provided at the appropriate time then we can advise whether listed building consent would be required.

It would be good practice to carry out informed authentic repairs using original materials, techniques etc. and as discussed use of mortars for external works would be best informed by clarifying surviving historic mortars. Repairs internally again should be carried out using lime mortars and avoiding gypsum plaster. It was also noted that works to provide a protected stairway enclosure had been installed to ensure adequate means of escape in case of fire.

Hope this helps to clarify our position and advice in this case.

Regards,

**Keith McKay**  
Historic Buildings Officer

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