

The Maidens Head, 67 High Street, Whitwell, Herts SG4 8AH

Heritage Statement

Installation of Safety Railings to Front Steps

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of an application for listed building consent for the installation of safety railings to the front steps of a listed building. The purpose of the proposal is to improve safety and accessibility while preserving the building's special architectural and historic interest.

2. Significance of the Listed Building

The Maidens Head former public house, now a private dwelling, is a Grade II listed building set within the village of Whitwell, North Hertfordshire. The building and its curtilage is primarily accessed via High Street and form part of the Whitwell Conservation Area. The building is listed for its architectural and historic significance, which is derived from its age, design, materials, and contribution to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The principal significance lies in the overall form of the building and its historic fabric. The front steps are a functional feature that contributes to the approach and setting of the building but are not considered a primary element of its significance.

3. Description of the Proposed Works

The proposal involves the installation of safety railings to the front steps. The railings will be positioned to follow the existing line of the steps and will not require alterations to the structure or form of the building. The works are limited in scope and confined to the immediate area of the steps.

4. Design and Materials

The railings will be of a simple and traditional design, appropriate to the character and age of the listed building. Materials and finishes will be selected to be sympathetic and visually unobtrusive. Fixings will be solely attached to the steps, ensuring that the historic fabric of the building is untouched.

5. Impact on Heritage Significance

The proposed works will cause no harm to the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building. There will be no loss of historic fabric, and the character of the front elevation will be preserved. Any minor visual impact is considered negligible and is outweighed by the benefit of improved safety for users of the building.

6. Conclusion

The installation of safety railings represents a modest, sensitive, and reversible intervention that respects the significance of the listed building. The proposal accords with established conservation principles by minimising intervention while allowing the building to be used safely and sustainably.