

Application Number:	P/LBC/2026/00823
Webpage:	https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/
Site address:	Lawn Bridge Lawn Bridge To Bridewell Lane - Road Motcombe
Proposal:	Carry out works and repairs to undercut training wall & replace fencing
Applicant name:	Mrs Jill Crouch
Case Officer:	Lucie Bruce
Ward Member(s):	Cllr V Potheary, Cllr B Ridout, Cllr C Woode

1. Reason application is going to committee:

The subject site is owned by Dorset Council.

2. Summary of recommendation:

GRANT listed building consent subject to conditions as set out in section 18 of this report.

3. Reason for the recommendation

The proposed work is necessary and will preserve and enhance the historic fabric of the listed bridge by keeping it safe for users. It is not considered to result in any harm to the listed building.

4. Key planning issues

Issue	Conclusion
Scale, design, impact on character and appearance	The work will preserve the historic fabric of the bridge. No harm on the character and appearance of the listed building.
Impact on landscape or heritage assets	No harm to the architectural and historical significance of the heritage asset. No harm to the character of the surrounding landscape.
Highway impacts, safety, access and parking	Necessary work for the bridge to remain safe for all users of the highway. The road must be closed for six weeks whilst the work is being undertaken.
Impact on trees	No impact on trees.
Biodiversity	No protected species was found. Mitigations measures are however in place during the works.
Environmental Implications	No work to remove or prune vegetation or scrub should be carried out within the bird nesting period.

Issue	Conclusion
	A member of the Natural Environment Team will be present when the works to the downstream parapet takes place in case bats are found.

5. Description of site

- Lawn Bridge is located at national grid reference 383458, 128299 on the C16 road northwest of Motcombe. It enables the C16 to cross the River Lodden adjacent to Gutchpool Farm.
- The bridge is Grade II listed (1172459) and dates from the early 19th Century
- It has a single semi-circular, chamfered arch. It has a plat band, and a rounded splayed parapet.
- The bridge spans the boundary of Motcombe and Gillingham parishes
- The River Lodden is relatively small at this point and turns through trees reach the bridge and turns once through the bridge.

6. Description of development

The bridge has several defects, likely due to being hit my a car, which need urgent remediation for it to remain safe for all users of the highway. Amongst other repair works, the following work requires listed building consent:

- Repair undercut training wall

The structure has been destabilised both by the erosion due to the river and by the removal of sediments. It is proposed to underpin the walls using concrete, and use rock fragments to protect the structure from future scour.

- Replace fencing

The fencing on the approaches to the bridge has started to rot with age and most of the posts now need to be replaced. Estate Fencing is proposed as a lower maintenance option.

7. Background and relevant planning history

2/2017/0360/STAUND - Decision: PER - Decision Date: 03/04/2017

Install approximately 25m of new 90mm plastic pipe to replace existing 3" CI pipe.

8. List of constraints

LAWN BRIDGE listed building grade G2. HE Reference: 1172459 - Distance: 0

Grade: II Listed Building: LAWN BRIDGE List Entry: 1172459; - Distance: 0

Existing ecological network - Terrestrial - Distance: 0

Higher Potential ecological network - Distance: 0

Dorset Priority Habitats: ; - Distance: 0

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) impact risk zone; - Distance: 0

Flood Zone 3 (record ID 10824582.0) - Distance: 0

Flood Zone 2 (record ID 8285511.0) - Distance: 0

Risk of Surface Water Flooding Extent 1 in 30 - Distance: 0

Risk of Surface Water Flooding Extent 1 in 100 - Distance: 0

Risk of Surface Water Flooding Extent 1 in 1000 - Distance: 0

Flood Risk Zone 3a - Distance: 0

Flood Risk Zone 3b (indicative) - Distance: 0

Surface water flooding - 1 in 100 year event plus 20% allowance - Distance: 0

Surface water flooding - 1 in 100 year event plus 40% allowance - Distance: 0

9. Consultations

All consultee responses can be viewed in full on the website.

Consultees

1. **P - Gillingham Town Council** - support
2. **P - Motcombe Parish Council** – no comments received
3. **Gillingham Ward Cllrs** – no comments received

Representations received

No comments received

Total - objections	Total - No objections	Total - comments
0	0	1

10. Duties

s38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination of planning applications must be in accordance with the development plan unless material circumstances indicate otherwise.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 - includes a general duty to 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 when considering whether to grant listed building consent.

11. Relevant policies

Development plan

In this case the development plan comprises:

Adopted North Dorset Local Plan:

The following policies are considered to be relevant to this proposal:

- Policy 4: The natural environment
- Policy 5: The historic environment
- Policy 20: The countryside

Made Neighbourhood Plans

Motcombe Neighbourhood Plan 2017 to 2027

Material considerations

Emerging local plans:

Paragraph 49 of the NPPF provides that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant plan policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan are to the policies of the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

The Dorset Council Local Plan

The Dorset Council Local Plan Options consultation took place between January and March 2021, with further consultation between 18 Aug – 31 October 2025. Being at a very early stage of preparation, the relevant policies in the draft plan should be accorded very limited weight in decision making.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy identifies local priorities for nature recovery and maps areas where action would be most beneficial. In planning decisions it is a material consideration, helping to ensure that development supports biodiversity enhancement and aligns with Dorset's agreed priorities for nature recovery.

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (as amended 2025)

Section 16 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment'- Paragraph 200 states that: "*any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, should require clear and convincing justification*". Paragraph 212 says that when considering designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. The effect of an application on the significance of non-designated heritage assets should also be taken into account (para 216).

Other material considerations

National Planning Practice Guidance

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990- section 66 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment' includes a general duty to 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*'

12. Human rights

Article 6 - right to a fair trial.

Article 8 - right to respect for private and family life and home.

The first protocol of Article 1 protection of property.

This recommendation is based on adopted development plan policies, the application of which does not prejudice the human rights of the applicant or any third party.

13. Public Sector Equalities Duty

As set out in the Equalities Act 2010, all public bodies, in discharging their functions must have “due regard” to this duty. There are 3 main aims: -

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is disproportionately low.

Whilst there is no absolute requirement to fully remove any disadvantage the Duty is to have “regard to” and remove or minimise disadvantage and in considering the merits of this planning application the planning authority has taken into consideration the requirements of the Public Sector Equalities Duty. There are no identified impacts on person with protected characteristics.

14. Public Benefits

The proposals would provide a number of financial and non-financial benefits, including public benefits. These are summarised in the table below:

What	Amount / value
Material considerations	
Works and repairs to the bridge	Preserve designated heritage asset and road safety

15. Planning Assessment

Policy 5 of the Local Plan states that any development proposal affecting a heritage asset (including its setting) will be assessed having regard to the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of that asset and securing a viable use for it that is most consistent with its conservation. For any designated heritage asset, great weight will be given to its conservation when considering any proposal that would have an impact on its significance.

- Repair undercut training wall

On the upstream face the training wall and bridge face have been undercut by the River Lodden as it no longer approaches the bridge in a straight line - it turns through 90 degrees twice to reach the arch. This has caused heavy scour and sediment movement resulting in undercutting which will destabilise the structure. It is proposed to underpin the walls using concrete and use an apron of rock mattress to protect the structure from future scour. The underpinning has to be concrete to have sufficient strength and lifespan to make the repair viable

Clear and convincing justifications as safety reasons for the works have been provided. As such, it is understood that the use of concrete is necessary. The works is not considered to harm the significance of the listed building but will preserve the overall structure.

- Replace fencing

The fencing on the approaches to the bridge has started to rot with age and most of the posts now need to be replaced. Due to the overhanging trees adjacent to the bridge keeping the area shaded the wooden posts are highly susceptible to rotting and regularly require replacement, so an alternative which is lower maintenance is preferred. Estate Fencing is proposed and considered to be in keeping with the bridge setting. Vehicle restraint is not required on this road.

- Repairs to parapet and missing stones are also being undertaken but do not require listed building consent.

The proposal would result in no harm to the historic significance of the building and would comply with the requirements of Policy 5 of the Local Plan and the relevant sections of the NPPF.

16. Environmental implications

Nesting birds

There was no evidence of nesting birds however, habitat suitable for nesting is present around the bridge. No work to remove or prune vegetation or scrub should be carried out within the bird nesting period which extends from mid-February to the end of August.

Bats

As bats could be utilising the newly created cavities between the blockwork, mitigation is required so that the works are undertaken in a manner that reduces the impacts to bats. As such, a member of the Natural Environment Team will be present when the works to the downstream parapet takes place. They will supervise the careful removal by hand of the dislodged blocks. If a bat is found it will be placed into a bat box or suitable container.

The proposal would comply with Policy 4 of the Local Plan.

17. Summary of issues and the planning balance

The proposal would not lead to harm to the historic fabric, character or setting of the listed building.

18. Recommendation

Grant listed building consent subject to the following conditions:

1. The work to which this listed building consent relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which the consent is granted.

Reason: This condition is required to be imposed by reason of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The works hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Location Plan

Proposed Plan BS0198-700-002

Reason: To preserve the architectural and historical qualities of the building.

3. The detailed biodiversity mitigation, compensation and enhancement strategy set out within the Bridge Ecology and Biodiversity Mitigation Report, conducted by the Dorset Council Natural Environment Team on 16/06/25, must be strictly adhered to during the carrying out of the development.

The development hereby approved must not be first brought into use unless and until:

- i) the mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures detailed in the Bridge Ecology and Biodiversity Mitigation Report have been completed in full, in accordance with any specified timetable.
- ii) evidence of compliance, including photographic evidence, in accordance with section B of the Bridge Ecology and Biodiversity Mitigation Report has been supplied to the Local Planning Authority. The development shall subsequently be implemented entirely in accordance with the Bridge Ecology and Biodiversity Mitigation Report and thereafter the approved mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures must be permanently maintained and retained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To mitigate and compensate for impacts on ecological receptors, and to provide biodiversity gains.

Informative Notes:

1. Informative: National Planning Policy Framework Statement

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF the council, as local planning authority, takes a positive approach to development proposals and is focused on providing sustainable development.

The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:

- offering a pre-application advice service, and
- as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions.

In this case:

- The application was acceptable as submitted and no further assistance was required.

2. The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended (section 1), it is an offence to remove, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built. Planning consent for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this act.

The Natural Environment Team, Dorset Council recommends that vegetation, hedge, shrubs and tree removal; translocation or cutting back avoids the bird nesting season which runs from mid-February to 31st August. This is in order to avoid impacts to nesting birds and infringement of the legislation.

Vegetation or site clearance as a result of this development should be undertaken outside of the nesting season specified above. In some seasons the nesting period may start before or extend beyond these dates, so the applicant should be aware that the dates are a guide only.

If clearance work has to be undertaken during the nesting season, a breeding bird survey needs to be carried out by a suitably qualified person no more than 48 hours before clearance /cutting works commence. Any active nests identified should be protected by a 5m exclusion zone until the young have left the nest.

As a general rule, it should be assumed that birds will be nesting in trees, scrub, reeds or substantial ditch side vegetation during the core breeding period, unless a survey had shown this not to be the case. In addition, some species are ground nesting, such as the skylark and lapwing, both of which can occur on grassland areas and cleared sites where there is a time lapse between demolition and development.

Officer Report

3. The applicant is advised that bats are protected in the UK by Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Part 3 of Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Work should proceed with caution and if any bats are found, all work should cease, the area in which the bats have been found should be made secure and advice sought advice sought from Natural England (tel: 0300 060 3900), website www.naturalengland.org.uk before proceeding.

Further information about the law and bats may be found on the following website <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bats-protection-surveys-and-licences>