

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Listed Building Consent Application

Building	Worthing Museum & Art Gallery, Chapel Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 1HP
Application Reference	AWDM/0461/26
Application Type	Listed Building Consent
Listing Status	Grade II Listed Building – Historic England List Entry No. 1429753
Proposed Works	Installation of a new louvre (1230mm x 515mm) to accommodate district heating network (DHN) pipework entry into the museum
Prepared By	Christopher Horner on behalf of Hemiko Ltd
Date of Statement	1 June 2026
Works Commencement	Subject to and upon grant of Listed Building Consent
Local Planning Authority	Worthing Borough Council (Adur & Worthing Councils)

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Christopher Horner on behalf of Hemiko Ltd in support of an application for Listed Building Consent (reference AWDM/0461/26) submitted to Worthing Borough Council. The application seeks consent for the installation of a new louvre panel within an existing window opening on the secondary elevation of Worthing Museum and Art Gallery, Chapel Road, Worthing, to facilitate the entry of district heating network (DHN) pipework into the building.

This statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023), the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and Worthing Borough Council's local validation requirements. It sets out the significance of the listed building, describes the proposed works in detail, assesses the impact of those works upon the building's significance, and provides justification for the proposal.

The level of detail contained within this statement is considered proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposed works, which are minor in physical extent and confined to a secondary elevation of the building.

2. Description of the Heritage Asset and Its Setting

2.1 The Building

Worthing Museum and Art Gallery is located on Chapel Road in the town centre of Worthing, West Sussex. The building was designed by the architects Crouch, Butler and Savage and opened on 14 December 1908. It was originally constructed to house both Worthing's public library – funded by the philanthropist Andrew Carnegie – and the town's museum collections. The library has since moved to a separate facility, and the building now operates solely as a museum and art gallery, managed by Worthing Borough Council's Leisure Services.

The building is constructed in red brick with extensive Portland stone dressings and detailing. It is symmetrically composed with a strong civic character typical of the Edwardian era. Architectural features of note include: paired sash windows with white-painted timber frames arranged in groups across the principal elevations; circular oculus windows with stone surrounds and keystones; elaborately carved stone foliate corbels and decorative friezes above the oculi; a stone string course separating the ground and upper floors; a balustraded stone terrace to the front and side elevations with turned stone balusters and square piers; and ornate ironwork gates with gilded finials providing access to the sunken service areas. The building is two storeys in height above a part-sunken basement level.

Worthing Museum holds one of the most significant costume collections in the United Kingdom, alongside collections of fine and decorative art, social history, toys, archaeology, and local history, comprising approximately 30,000 items in the costume collection alone. It is the largest museum in West Sussex.

2.2 Listing Status

The building is designated as a Grade II Listed Building on the National Heritage List for England, under List Entry Number 1429753. It is listed for the following principal reasons as described in the Historic England list entry: architectural interest as an imposing symmetrically-composed civic building, and historic interest as one of the town's principal civic buildings of the Edwardian period, retaining its original character and function as a public institution.

2.3 Setting and Wider Context

The museum is situated in a prominent central position on Chapel Road. The Worthing Town Hall is located immediately adjacent to the west. To the south-east, the Grade II* listed Church of St Paul's is visible. The building sits within the Worthing town centre context and is a landmark civic structure within the street scene.

The proposed works are located on the secondary north-west elevation, within a sunken service area accessed via the stone-balustraded steps to the side of the

building. This area is partially screened from the principal public street frontage by the stone balustrade and is at a lower level than the pavement. The sunken area contains existing service infrastructure including existing louvre panels, drainage, and mechanical plant.

3. Statement of Significance

For the purposes of this statement, significance is assessed in accordance with paragraph 189 of the NPPF (2023) and Historic England's Conservation Principles (2008), and is considered under four aspects: architectural, historic, evidential, and communal.

3.1 Architectural Significance

The building possesses high architectural significance. It represents a confident and accomplished example of Edwardian civic architecture, characterised by its symmetrical composition, the quality of its brick and stonework, and the richness of its carved decorative detailing. The circular oculus windows with their cross-shaped keystones and foliate corbels above are particularly notable features. The stone balustrade terracing to the front and side elevations contributes substantially to the civic grandeur of the building and its setting. The architects Crouch, Butler and Savage produced a building of considerable quality which remains largely unaltered in its principal external character.

3.2 Historic Significance

The building carries significant historic interest as Worthing's first purpose-built public library and museum, made possible through the benefaction of Andrew Carnegie. It represents the civic ambition of Edwardian Worthing and the town's investment in public education and culture. Having served its community continuously since 1908 – a period of over 115 years – the building retains strong associative historic interest. Its ongoing use as a public museum directly continues its original civic purpose.

3.3 Evidential Significance

The physical fabric of the building provides direct evidence of Edwardian construction techniques, materials, and craftsmanship. The red brick with gauged brick arches, Portland stone dressings, and original timber sash windows are all largely intact and contribute to the evidential record of early twentieth century civic building practice.

3.4 Communal Significance

As Worthing's principal public museum and art gallery, the building holds considerable communal significance as a cultural and civic landmark. It is widely recognised and valued by the local community and contributes positively to the character and identity of Worthing town centre.

4. Description of Proposed Works

4.1 Context of the Works

Hemiko Ltd is the Energy Services Company (ESCO) appointed to deliver the Worthing Heat Networks project – a district heating network (DHN) providing low-carbon heat to public buildings across Worthing town centre. The district heating network infrastructure was granted planning permission by Worthing Borough Council under planning reference AWD/1196/23. The museum is one of the anchor buildings to be connected to this permitted network. The DHN supplies heat via two pre-insulated pipes: a flow pipe and a return pipe (both DN50/180 specification, with 60mm insulation lagging and outer cladding), which run externally along the building's secondary elevation within the sunken service area before entering the building fabric.

4.2 The Proposed Louvre

The proposed works consist of the installation of a single new louvre panel within an existing window opening on the north-west secondary elevation of the building, set within the sunken service area. The louvre is required to provide a weatherproof and aesthetically appropriate means of allowing the DHN flow and return pipework to pass through the building envelope.

The louvre panel has the following specification, as shown on Hemiko drawing reference 2389-HEM-MAG-XX-DR-Y-2104 (Construction Issue, dated 04/01/26):

- Overall dimensions: 1230mm wide x 515mm high
- Construction: split into upper and lower sections to allow installation within the existing window opening without structural alteration to the opening itself
- Louvre blades, jambs, and mullions: to replicate in spacing and colour the existing louvre already installed in the adjacent window opening on the same elevation
- Pipe apertures: two circular openings in the lower section accommodating the DN50/180 DHN return pipe (left) and DN50/180 DHN flow pipe (right), with centres set at 626mm and 960mm from the left jamb respectively
- Pipe lagging and cladding: 60mm insulation with outer cladding, total pipe diameter with lagging and cladding as shown on drawing

4.3 External Pipework Enclosure

In addition to the louvre, a pipework enclosure is proposed within the sunken service area at basement level to enclose and protect the external section of the DHN pipework as it runs along the base of the building wall. This is detailed on drawing reference 2389-HEM-MAG-B1-DR-Y-2104 (Construction Issue, dated 09/03/26). The enclosure is approximately 820mm wide x 1100mm deep in plan, with a height of approximately 2080mm. It consists of a supporting frame designed to withstand marine conditions, with weather-resistant panel cladding. The colour and finish of the cover are subject to agreement with the client (Worthing Borough Council) and will be selected to be sympathetic to the building's materials.

4.4 Method of Installation

The louvre is to be installed within the existing window opening. No new openings will be cut through the building fabric. The existing window opening provides the aperture through which the louvre will be fitted. Fixings will be made to the existing window frame surround. The installation is considered reversible in that the louvre could be removed in the future and the opening restored without permanent damage to the historic brick and stonework fabric of the building.

5. Justification for the Proposed Works

5.1 The Worthing Heat Networks Programme

The Worthing Heat Networks project is a low-carbon district energy scheme being delivered by Hemiko Ltd on behalf of Worthing Borough Council and Worthing Heat Network ESCO Limited. The scheme provides centralised, low-carbon heat to a number of key public buildings in Worthing town centre, replacing less efficient and more carbon-intensive individual heating systems. The connection of Worthing Museum and Art Gallery to the district heating network forms an integral part of this programme and directly supports the council's climate and sustainability objectives, as well as the UK Government's commitment to decarbonising public buildings.

5.2 Necessity of the Louvre

The district heating pipework must enter the building through the building envelope. A louvre is the standard, industry-recognised method of providing a weatherproof, ventilated aperture through which pipework can pass while protecting the building interior from weather ingress. The louvre also provides a finished, aesthetically considered appearance to what would otherwise be an exposed opening.

The use of the existing window opening for the louvre installation means that no new penetrations through the historic brick and stone fabric of the building are required, which is the least damaging approach available. The alternative – cutting a new opening through the brick fabric at a different location – would cause significantly greater harm to the historic fabric and has been discounted on those grounds.

5.3 Choice of Location

The proposed louvre is positioned in a window opening within the sunken service area on the north-west secondary elevation of the building. This location has been chosen specifically because it is the least visually prominent position available, being below the level of the street, screened by the historic stone balustrade, and already established as the building's service zone with existing louvre panels, mechanical plant, and service infrastructure. The location is not visible from the principal public elevations facing Chapel Road.

5.4 Design Approach

The new louvre has been deliberately designed to replicate the specification, blade spacing, and colour of the existing louvre panel already installed in the adjacent window opening on the same elevation. This approach ensures that the new louvre will be visually consistent with the established character of the service elevation and will not appear as an alien addition. The use of matched materials and detailing demonstrates a considered and respectful approach to the character of the listed building.

6. Assessment of Impact on Significance

6.1 Impact on Architectural Significance

The proposed louvre will be installed in an existing window opening and will match in design and finish the existing louvre in the adjacent opening. It will not alter the principal elevations of the building, which carry the highest architectural significance. The sunken service area in which the works are located is not a primary element of the building's architectural composition. The new louvre, by virtue of its design replicating the existing, will integrate coherently into the service elevation and will not detract from the building's overall architectural character.

The impact on the architectural significance of the listed building is considered to be negligible.

6.2 Impact on Historic Fabric

No new openings are to be created in the historic brick or stone fabric of the building. The louvre is installed within an existing window opening. Fixings will be made to the existing window frame. The intervention is the minimum necessary to achieve the functional objective and is reversible. The pipework enclosure at basement level is a freestanding structure within the sunken area and does not involve any fixing into or alteration of the historic masonry walls.

The impact on the historic fabric is considered to be minimal and reversible.

6.3 Impact on Setting

The works are confined to the sunken service area on the secondary north-west elevation. This area is below street level and screened from the principal public realm by the historic stone balustrade. The louvre and external pipework enclosure will not be visible from Chapel Road or from the key public views of the building. The setting of the listed building as experienced from the street will be unaffected.

The impact on the setting of the listed building is considered to be negligible.

6.4 Overall Assessment

Taking into account all of the above, the harm to the significance of the listed building arising from the proposed works is considered to be less than substantial, and in practice is minimal to negligible. The works are physically minor, confined to a secondary service elevation, reversible, and designed with care to be consistent with the existing character of that part of the building.

In accordance with paragraph 202 of the NPPF (2023), where a 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. The public benefits in this case are clear and significant: the connection of a major public cultural building to a low-carbon district heating network, contributing directly to the decarbonisation of the public estate and supporting Worthing Borough Council's own climate commitments. These public benefits are considered to substantially outweigh the minimal harm identified.

7. Conclusion

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of an application for Listed Building Consent (ref: AWDM/0461/26) for the installation of a new louvre panel and external pipework enclosure at Worthing Museum and Art Gallery, Chapel Road, Worthing, a Grade II Listed Building.

The proposed works are required to facilitate the connection of the museum to the Worthing Heat Networks district heating system, a low-carbon energy infrastructure programme delivering significant public benefit in terms of carbon reduction and the decarbonisation of public buildings.

The works have been carefully designed to minimise impact on the significance of the listed building. The louvre is positioned within an existing window opening on a secondary service elevation, replicates the design of an existing louvre on the same elevation, and does not require any new penetrations through the historic masonry fabric. The pipework enclosure is a reversible, freestanding structure within the existing sunken service area.

The harm to the significance of the listed building is assessed as less than substantial and, in practice, negligible. The public benefits of the district heating connection substantially outweigh this harm in accordance with paragraph 202 of the NPPF (2023).

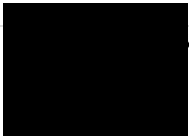
It is respectfully submitted that Listed Building Consent should be granted for the proposed works.

8. Policy and Legislative Framework

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 – statutory basis for Listed Building Consent
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), December 2023 – in particular paragraphs 189, 200, and 202
- Historic England, Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2008)
- Historic England, Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015)
- Worthing Borough Council Local Plan – heritage and conservation policies
- Historic England National Heritage List for England – List Entry No. 1429753

9. Supporting Documents

Drawing Ref	Description
2389-HEM-MAG-XX-DR-Y-2104 (C01)	Museum & Art Gallery Entry Louvre Detail Drawing – Hemiko, dated 04/01/26
2389-HEM-MAG-B1-DR-Y-2104 (C01)	Museum & Art Gallery Pipework Enclosure Detail Drawing – Hemiko, dated 09/03/26
Photos 1-7	Site photographs showing existing building fabric, existing louvre, service area, and DHN pipework

Signed: 

Christopher Horner

On behalf of Hemiko Ltd

Date: 1 June 2026

Works to commence upon grant of Listed Building Consent by Worthing Borough Council.