Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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Officer's Name: Steven Vallance
Officer's Title: Planning Officer

Application No: **PL/2023/05061**
Proposed works include alterations to existing roof structures, introduction of new roof-lights and installation of a new windows.
The Willows, 22 Frome Road, Wingfield, Trowbridge, BA14 9LL

Please find following comments in respect of the above application(s).

Recommendations:

X	Comment (for reasons set out below)
	Support
	Support subject to conditions (please set out below)
	Object (for reasons set out below)
	No objections

Scope of comments: the following comments relate to the built historic environment.

Policy: From the point of view of the historic environment the main statutory tests are set out within the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Sections 16 (LBC) and 66 (PP) require that **special regard** be given to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

The NPPF outlines government policy, including its policy in respect of the historic environment. Section 16 of the NPPF 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the Government's high-level policies concerning heritage and sustainable development. Paragraphs 201-3 of the NPPF require a balanced approach with any harm which would be caused being weighed against the potential public benefits which might be achieved. Paragraph 197 requires local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

The Council's Core Strategy 'Core Policy 58: Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment' requires that designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved and where possible enhanced. It is also required that distinctive elements of Wiltshire's historic environment, including non-designated heritage assets, which contribute to a sense of local character and identity will be conserved, and where possible enhanced.

The Council's Core Strategy CP 57: Ensuring high quality design requires a high quality of design in all new developments. Proposals are required to "demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire through:

i. enhancing local distinctiveness by responding to the value of the natural and historic environment, relating positively to its landscape setting and the existing pattern of development…
ii. the retention and enhancement of existing important landscaping and natural features…
iii. responding positively to the existing townscape and landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate the building into its setting.

Site: The site is a Grade II listed building. Historically the dwelling was a small brick cottage built in the 18th Century.

Proposal: The proposal seeks alterations to the existing roof structures, introduction of new roof-lights and installation of a new window

Relevant planning history: PL/2023/00435 & PL/2022/09824

Issues: Impact on significance of listed building

Assessment: Paragraph 194 requires that applicants describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. This should include sufficient information to provide a clear understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and its setting and the potential impact of any proposals on that significance. In this case, the applications are accompanied by a "Heritage, Design & Access Statement" which provides sufficient information to understand the impact of the proposals and is proportionate to their scope. The requirements of the NPPF are therefore met in this respect.

The application identifies the building as having 18th Century Origins with the central core of the existing stair hall, and a 19th Century range which composes the present main facade of the building.

The principle significance of this asset is chiefly associated with the 18th Century core and the 19th Century range.

The only part of the works which could adversely impact on the earlier core of the site is the element referred to as FF03 in the submission as this element proposes the widening of an existing box dormer. Such works would occupy the full width of this element of the roof and would have an undue horizontal emphasis. Whilst this would not result in loss of historic material, it would have an adverse effect on the traditional proportions and sense of space within this section of the building which would harm the character and appearance of the heritage asset. In view of this concern I suggest that the scheme is amended to remove this element and retain the size of the current window opening.

The other works to the modern elements of the building, namely the reinstatement of the pitched roof to the guest annex are of minimal impact to the historic fabric and do not diminish the character or heritage asset of the property. The proposed alterations to the historic fabric are designed to be sympathetic to the character of the heritage asset and are set alongside the recently consented works that will preserve the qualities of the Grade II listed fabric.

The proposed works to remove the existing inverted dormer is considered to be beneficial as the existing arrangement has a discordant appearance and fails to positively contribute to the appearance of the listed building.

Summary & conclusion: The NPPF confirms that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). It makes clear that any harm to a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification.

The following further amendments are required before the application can be determined/fully assessed:

- Amended design for the widening of an existing box dormer