CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/05708
Date of Inspection:	
Date site notice posted:	Sent to site owner
Date of press notice:	
SITE ADDRESS:	Fielding House, 14a The Close, Salisbury, SP1 2EB
PROPOSAL:	Application to alter the existing kitchen fireplace.

POLICIES

Wiltshire Core Strategy CP 58

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Chapter 16 of the NPPF (revised July 2021)

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Salisbury City Council: no response received by consultation deadline

Historic England: no comment (their letter dated 17/8/2023)

REPRESENTATIONS

None received

THE HERITAGE ASSET

Fielding House is a grade II* listed building, listed together with number 14. The list description reads as follows:

'Nos 14 & 14A (Formerly listed as No 14) SU 1429 NE 4/48 28.2.52. 1I GV 2. C18. 2 storey and attic. Painted brick on stucco plinth. Moulded lst floor string. Small moulded wood eaves cornice. Old tile roof and flanking chimneys. 1 dormer central over door, 5 windows on 1st floor with central window and door under in slight projection, and with moulded brick floor and central 10-panel door in panelled reveal, with doorcase of fluted Doric pilasters supporting entablature with bracketed cornice and pediment, approached by 4 moulded stone steps, with early C19 guard rails. All windows have architrave frames. An extension of same date and design to left hand has one 1st floor window, and secondary 8-panel door with similar door surround but no pediment, and flanked by 2 narrow windows. This part is built into the Close Wall beside St Anne's Gate qv and*

has a window facing onto Exeter Street. for the east front see under St Anne's Gate qv. The interior of No 14A has fine panelling and a good staircase with twisted balusters swept round to bottom with moulded handrail.

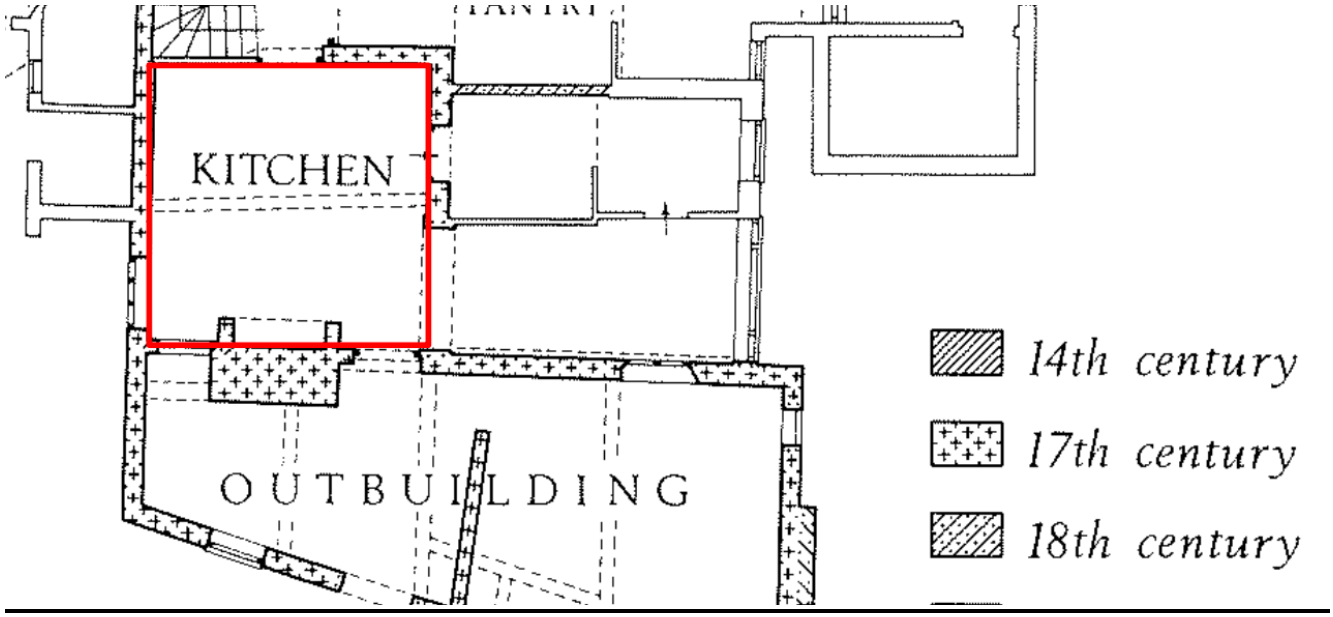
Nos 14, 14A, St Anne's Gate and No 15 form a very picturesque group'.

As the list description also notes, '*all the listed buildings in the Close form an outstanding group'.*

The Close is also within the City of Salisbury conservation area.

The plan of number 14 is contained within the RCHME book on Houses of The Close and is also reproduced by the agent.

The fabric is identified as being 17th century (although this does not categorically rule out later alterations).



THE PROPOSALS

The application relates to the kitchen. There is an existing fireplace opening (plain, with a surmounting timber mantel shelf) in which there is sited an aga. The applicant wishes to move the mantel shelf higher up the wall and enlarge the opening so that the opening is more usable (ie can bend over the aga). The applicant is hoping to relocate the existing timber lintel.

THE LEGISLATIVE/POLICY FRAMEWORK

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 says:

'*In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority…… shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building* ***or its setting****….'*

Paragraph 197 of the NPPF says:

'In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets……'

The Council's Core Strategy Policy CP58 'Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment' requires that "designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner appropriate to their significance." 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.

Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy Policy CP57 'Ensuring high quality design and place shaping': A high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings. Development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality.

ASSESSMENT

The architect anticipates that '*the fireplace will be of the original c17 brick construction with the fireplace opening likely formed using a lintel of timber (oak?) construction with chamfered edges, bearing on brick piers'*. They go on to say that:

'*A timber lintel would be consistent in this part of the house from this period, which has remained the working kitchen throughout and would likely be more plain in its design appropriate for its setting as a 'back of house' service area'*.

And

'*However, if such a lintel remains, its exact position/height Is currently unknown. It is possible that the opening has been reduced in height in more recent years'*.

The works are a modest change that enable the existing opening to continue to be used as a kitchen which is desirable given it has always been a kitchen (thereby sustaining significance).

Clearly the application contains an element of speculation and potentially involves the loss of 17th century fabric. In the context of the whole building (with a significant amount of fabric dating from the 17th century), this would result in a small amount of harm (loss of historic wall), but in the context of facilitating the continued viability of the kitchen, this harm would seem to be outweighed by the positives. As such the proposals are considered acceptable and in accordance with Section 66 of the Act as well as core policy 58.

The works would have on impact on the CA, being internal and therefore would meet the requirements of section 72 of the Act.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE with conditions (detailed recording condition once there has been some opening up and consideration of whether it is possible to reuse the timber lintel if there is one etc).