Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

3 October 2023

Fiona Webb
Senior Conservation Officer (Consultant)
Wiltshire Council Conservation (Central)

Officer's Name: Jonathan Maidman
Officer's Title: Planning Officer

Application No: **PL/2023/07101**
Demolition of a single storey rear extension and replacement with new proposed single storey rear extension. New replacement courtyard roof and wall and internal alterations.
Manor Farm, Bulkington, SN10 1SL

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

Recommendations:

	No Comment
	Support
	Support subject to conditions (please set out below)
X	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: Manor Farm is located on the outskirts of Bulkington Village and forms a large dairy farm with several outbuildings. The property is circa late 18th / early 19th century and is grade 2 listed brick dwelling with slate hipped roof (date of listing 1988). The farmhouse historically is shown in a U shape form.

Proposal: The proposal seeks the demolition of a single storey rear extension and a proposed single storey rear extension. Also a new replacement courtyard roof and wall and internal alterations are proposed.

Relevant planning history: PL/2023/03052 and PL/2023/02719 - Demolition of a single storey rear extension and proposed new two storey rear extension. New replacement courtyard roof and wall and internal alterations

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, whilst the applications are accompanied by a "Design and Access Heritage Statement" the document provides limited information about the building and fails to provide any objective assessment of the fabric affected, its date or significance or of the impact of the proposals and, as a result, it fails to meet the requirements of the NPPF.

The proposed alterations include:

<u>Inner courtyard works:</u>
The proposals include removing the opaque plastic roof, brick wall and current UPVC windows and timber door and replacing them with more appropriate materials including a stepped lead roof with flat roof lights, light weight timber frame with full height glazing set back from the main elevations with new double glazed timber doors. This space would then be used as a dining room and garden room with improved glazing to the rear courtyard.

<u>Rear Extension:</u>
The proposals include the retention of the existing 1970's single storey rear extension. A second single door opening is proposed to provide access to the new pantry. New metal double glazed

French doors with side screens would be installed to the kitchen courtyard, which would match the new courtyard doors. A new full height and full width timber picture window double is proposed to the north west elevation and a new window is proposed to the south west elevation to match the existing style. An existing doorway would be reinstated to the end gable of the northwest wing, which would provide the main entrance into the house from the farm. This new layout would provide a WC and new large utility space.

First floor internal layout:
Minor alterations are planned to alter the existing modern layout to form a new master bedroom with ensuite and also rearrange the existing family bathroom. These alterations would remove modern partitions and not historic fabric. One new window opening is proposed to the south east elevation to provide light into an new ensuite.

Each element of the works is discussed in turn below:
Inner courtyard works:
Whilst there is an existing infill development within the historic U shaped plan form of the property, this detracts from the significance of the listed building due to its alien modern character, modern materials, UPVC windows and loss of the characteristic plan form.

No planning history exists for this extension, and it is not mentioned in the list description. Whilst historic maps have been submitted these in my view do not demonstrate that this extension existed before the listing of this building. As such before detailed consideration is given to the principle of a new infill scheme, either additional more affirmative evidence is requested of the date of this extension or the applicants should provide a sworn statutory declaration as to the date of the erection of the structure.

The proposed full height glazing is an improvement on the previous design and does provide more of a lightweight contemporary extension.

The proposal would internally result in blocking up a doorway on the northern wall of the courtyard space. Details of the proposed treatment of this opening will be required.

Rear extension:
In principle, under the requirements of current P(LB&CA)A 1990 legislation there is no objection to the retention of the existing 1970's extension since this is existing. However you should be aware that under the requirements of the pending Levelling Up legislation that there will be an obligation to enhance the significance of listed buildings. If this legislation comes into effect in heritage terms I would be seeking the removal of this extension since it detracts from the original symmetrical plan form of the farmhouse building. There would also be loss of historic fabric due to the knocking through of the original rear wall of the wing. The large glazed fixed window in the northwest elevation would also be an incongruous feature to the farmhouse and out of keeping with its vernacular character.

First floor internal layout:
The removal of modern partitions is not an issue. However the new window opening proposed at first floor in the south east elevation has no historic precedent and this would result in loss of historic fabric and form of the building. There is no requirement for natural daylight in an ensuite. Also no details have been submitted for any extractor, flues, vents, and S&V pipe. As such this work is unjustified and important information required to assess this proposal is missing..

Para 199 of the NPPF confirms that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and Para 200 requires that any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration .... or development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification. The application does not provide compelling evidence that this proposal is necessary to facilitate the ongoing viability of the listed building.

Whilst paragraph 202 allows that a level of harm may be offset by public benefits, which could include conservation benefits, in this case no objective justification has been provided for the works. As a result, the proposal fails to meet with the requirements of current conservation legislation, policy or guidance and I therefore recommend refusal.

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 proposals will result in harm to the building via the loss of historic fabric and character and via change to its layout and original external form. The proposals involve only part of the building and could therefore be considered as causing 'less than substantial harm' for the purposes of interpreting the NPPF, but they involve the loss of important structural historic fabric and should not be seen as being of lesser consequence. Indeed, the wording of the NPPF and the 'special regard' by Sections 16 and 66 of the Act requires that any level harm caused should be taken seriously.

Whilst paragraph 202 allows that a level of harm may be offset by public benefits, which could include conservation benefits, in this case no objective justification has been provided for the works and the proposals are articulated as being primarily for the convenience of the occupants i.e. a private benefit. As a result, the proposals fail to meet with the requirements of current conservation legislation, policy or guidance and I therefore recommend refusal.

As such from a heritage perspective, the proposal fails to comply with s.16 and 66 of the P(LB&CA)A 1990, policy CP57 and CP58 of the WCS and heritage advice in the NPPF.