CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/06408
Application Type:	Householder planning permission
Site Inspection:	
Consultation ends:	14 November 2023
Case officer:	Stefan Galyas

Site Address:	BASSET DOWN FARMHOUSE, BASSET DOWN, SWINDON, SN4 9QP
Proposal:	Proposed open porch and alterations to external doors.
Recommendation:	Approve with Conditions

Site Description

Bassett Down Farm is a two-storey, thatched detached Grade II listed property situated along a private lane to the west of Hay Lane in Bassett Down. The main building has been extensively altered and extended over several time periods and the existing building presents as a rendered, painted and mainly thatched dwelling.

The building is located in a complex where various building styles and construction materials feature. The property sits in an elevated position and coves substantial grounds with sways of greenery and mature vegetation to the southern elevation.

There is no defined settlement boundary for Bassett Down and the site is considered to be located within the open countryside for planning purposes. The site is not located within a Conservation Area but is set within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Proposal

The application seeks planning permission for the development of an open porch and alterations to the southeast elevation French doors serving the study. External materials would comprise a natural slate roof covering, oak posts, braces and edge beams.

Policies

Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) Adopted 2015

Core Policy 1 – Settlement Strategy
Core Policy 2 – Delivery Strategy
Core Policy 19 – Royal Wootton Bassett Community Area
Core Policy 51 – Landscape
Core Policy 57 – Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
Core Policy 58 – Ensuring Conservation of the Historic Environment

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Adopted 2023

Paragraph 2 – Compliance with the Development Plan
Paragraphs 7 and 8 – Sustainable Development
Paragraph 11 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Paragraph 38 – Proactive Approach to Decisions
Paragraph 47 – Determination in Accordance with the Development Plan

Paragraph 110 – Consideration of Development Proposals
Paragraph 130 – Function and Form of Development
Paragraph 176 – Conserving and Enhancing Landscape and Scenic Beauty
Paragraphs 195, 197 and 199-202 – Impact Upon Heritage Assets

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Section 66(1) – Special regard to be had to the preservation of a listed building or its setting.
Section 72(1) – Special Attention to be Paid Towards the Preservation and Enhancement of a Conservation Area

Assessment

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require that the determination of planning applications be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states within Section 66(1) that 'special regard' be given to the desirability of preserving a listed building, it setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority, in considering whether to grant planning permission to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
In having 'special regard' in regard to listed buildings and paying special attention to conservation areas, the NPPF states that the assessment must identify whether the proposal causes substantial harm, less than substantial harm or no harm to the heritage asset.

Key Issues

Principle of Development
Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area, Including Heritage Assets
Impact on Residential Amenity

Relevant Planning History

PL/2021/10387 and PL/2021/10205 – Proposed Single Storey Extension to Provide Family/Garden Room.

Consultation Responses

Lydiard Tregoze Parish Council: No comment.

Wiltshire Council Conservation Officer: No objection. The initial scheme was objected to due to the proposed porch being considered an obtrusive design where the eaves level of adjoining 20th century extension were not adhered to. This was subsequently revised, to which the Conservation Officer raised no objection.

Representations

There were no letters of representation received in response to the proposal.

Principle of Development

The principle of extending or altering an existing dwellinghouse located within the defined settlement framework is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Core Policies 1, 2, 19 and 57 of the WCS.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area, Including Heritage Assets

Core Policy 57 states that new development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality. Residential extensions/alterations such as this are acceptable in principle subject to there being no adverse impacts.

Good design helps to provide a sense of place, creates or reinforces local distinctiveness, and promotes community cohesiveness and social wellbeing; The layout and design of new developments must also be based on a thorough understanding of the site itself and its wider context, and seek to maximise the benefits of the site's characteristics. This will require careful consideration of the site layout. No two sites share the same landscapes, contours, relationship with surrounding buildings, street pattern and features. The proximity of poor quality or indistinct development is not a justification for standard or poor design solutions. New development should integrate into its surroundings whilst seeking to enhance the overall character of the locality; A high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings.

Paragraphs 194-202 of the NPPF deal with proposals affecting heritage assets and considering potential impacts. In determining applications, the local planning authority is required to take account of:

a) The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) The positive contribution that the conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities, including their economic vitality, and

c) The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Core Policy 57 of the WCS seeks to secure a high standard of design in all new developments, including extensions, alterations and changing the use of existing buildings. Among other matters, it requires proposals to be sympathetic to and conserve historic buildings and historic landscapes (iv). Core Policy 58 (iii) states that designated heritage assets, including buildings and structures of special architectural or historic interest, and their settings, will be conserved and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Bassett Down Farmhouse by virtue of its designation is considered to be significant in heritage terms and this significance is considered to arise from its architectural and historic value. This is further set out within the list description whereby it is noted that the building includes an original 18th century 3 room plan.

The application primarily relates to an external alteration to the existing 20th century study to the east elevation. The proposal would see the addition of a porch to the houses' north-eastern corner. The proposed materials were revised from the original scheme submitted, omitting the proposed zinc roof and instead proposing a slate roof covering. Additional works include alterations to the study's rear (south-eastern) elevation where two pairs of French doors would be added, utilising a black powder coated finish.

The proposed porch's eaves would be set slightly below the existing study's, respecting the change in ground level and also appearing subservient. It was considered by the Conservation Officer that the proposed alterations to simplify the design of the 20th century extension would have a neutral impact. The 20th century side elevation extension was considered to hold no special interest as stated within the list description. These comments are concurred with by the Case Officer and the alterations are not considered to give rise to concerns regarding the impact on the significance of the listed building in question.
In light of the above, it is considered that the proposal would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area including the various identified heritage assets as well as the AONB. Accordingly, the proposed development would meet the requirements of Core Policies 1, 2, 19, 57 and 58 of the WCS and Paragraphs 130, 194, 195 and 197 of the WCS.

Impact on Residential Amenity

WCS policy CP57 (Ensuring High Quality Design & Space Shaping) requires that development should ensure the impact on the amenities of existing occupants/neighbours is acceptable and ensuring that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself. The NPPF includes that planning should "always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings". Residential amenity is affected by significant changes to the environment including privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and living areas within private gardens and this, therefore, needs to be carefully considered accordingly.
The proposed porch would protect the existing door serving the dining room from weathering and is considered to be limited in size and scale. Additionally, the proposed double French doors would look out to the woodland to the south-east and is not considered to give rise to an unacceptable overlooking impact.
Accordingly, the proposal is not considered to result in significant harm in regard to loss of outlook, overshadowing or noise impact on neighbouring properties.

Conclusion

It is concluded that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and in design and amenity terms, in accordance with Wiltshire Core Strategy Core Policies 1, 2, 19, 57 and 58 and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.
The proposal accords with the adopted development plan and as such, should be granted permission.

Recommendation

That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

Conditions: (3)

1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

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

21060.124-A Proposed Plans and Elevations
Received 27/10/23

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3 The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match in material, colour and texture those detailed on the application form and approved plans.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

Informatives: (3)

5 Any alterations to the approved plans, brought about by compliance with Building Regulations or any other reason must first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before commencement of work.

6 The applicant should note that the grant of planning permission does not include any separate permission which may be needed to erect a structure in the vicinity of a public sewer. Such permission should be sought direct from Thames Water Utilities Ltd / Wessex Water Services Ltd. Buildings are not normally allowed within 3.0 metres of a Public Sewer although this may vary depending on the size, depth, strategic importance, available access and the ground conditions appertaining to the sewer in question.

7 The applicant is requested to note that this permission does not affect any private property rights and therefore does not authorise the carrying out of any work on land outside their control. If such works are required it will be necessary for the applicant to obtain the landowners consent before such works commence.

If you intend carrying out works in the vicinity of the site boundary, you are also

advised that it may be expedient to seek your own advice with regard to the requirements of the Party Wall Act 1996.