HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

In respect of:

ALTERATION AND EXTENSION

At:

BROADMEAD FARMHOUSE, WEST KNOYLE, BA12 6AE

On behalf of:

Matthew Dawson & Angharad Hunt

Date:

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This statement accompanies applications for alteration and extension to Broadmead Farmhouse, a Grade II listed farmhouse that dates from the late 17th century.

1.2 The main objectives of the proposals are to address the poor appearance, usability and condition of the conservatory attached to the rear of the house and improve the layout of the house and design of the windows.

1.3 The report describes the impact of the proposals on the heritage asset and its setting to fulfil the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, revised December 2023), and to meet the council's local validation checklist for applications affecting heritage assets.

1.4 A Statement of Significance was produced for Broadmead (July 2023), and this was used to inform the application proposals. This impact assessment should be read in conjunction with that report (included as part of the application submission).

1.5 In summary, Broadmead Farmhouse is of significance as late 17th century vernacular farmhouse constructed in the local limestone and extended in the 18th century. The setting of the farmhouse within the rural landscape and at the edge of the village contributes to an appreciation of the building's historic function and associations. There are some outbuildings associated with the house, two of which are historic and deemed curtilage listed.

1.6 The farmhouse was significantly altered c.1990 following a fire and the list description no longer accurately reflects the building as it currently stands, particularly the interior, of which little original fabric survives. Nonetheless, a good degree of the external wall fabric survives, and the evolution of the farmhouse remains legible.

5.1 Of relevance to the current application, the conservatory at the rear of the house is a modern addition, in a poor state of repair and is not of special interest. The existing windows are poorly detailed modern double-glazed timber windows, having storm-proof, visually imbalanced' casements and heavy glazing bars. The dormers on the rear roof slope are modern insertions of unsympathetic proportions.

1.7 A pre-application enquiry was submitted for alteration and extension along similar lines to the current proposals (reference PL/2023/01048). The conservation officer's response (letter dated 24 August 2023) was broadly supportive. There was a

reservation regarding the ‘loss of perception’ of the rear historic projection from a proposed flat-roofed infill.

2.0 Proposals

2.1 The current application relates to various alterations and extension, described below.

Replacement Windows

The existing 'imbalanced' storm-proof double-glazed casement windows are proposed to be replaced with slim-profile double-glazed painted timber windows having flush-fitting, balanced casements and narrow, moulded, horizontal glazing bars. The westernmost ground floor window on the front elevation that was enlarged by a previous owner would be reduced in depth (i.e., the cill raised) in line with the others. The three modern dormers on the rear roof slope would be replaced with new inverted dormers with lead flat roofs.

Removal of Door to Lean-to and Insertion of Window

The non-original front door of the lean-to is proposed to be removed, the lower half blocked up with stone to match surrounding and a two-light timber casement window inserted.

Gate Formed within Stone Boundary Wall

A pedestrian opening is proposed to be formed in the stone boundary wall attached to the front of the lean-to and a solid timber gate inserted.

Lead Flat-Roofed Porch to Lean-to

An open-fronted porch is proposed for weather protection to the side door of the lean-to. It would comprise a lead flat-roofed canopy supported by Douglas fir posts.

Two Rooflights within Lean-to Roof

Two conservation rooflights are proposed for improved natural light for the boot room within the lean-to.

Demolition of Conservatory and Replacement Extension

The existing conservatory would be demolished and replaced with a kitchen/living room extension comprising a linear, single-storey, pitch-roofed structure set at an angle to the rear wall of the house and attached via a flat-roofed link. Most of the walls would be formed in coursed rubble stone with dressed stone quoins but with

vertical cedar cladding in the west gable (facing the garden terrace) where the roof would overhang and be supported on circular ashlar stone columns to create a loggia. There would be large full-height windows/doors within the north and west facades. The roof would be covered in natural slate. Two Velux rooflights would be inserted towards the western end of the north roof slope for the dining area. The west façade of the linking element would have vertical cedar cladding; the roof of the link would be formed in single-ply membrane and it would incorporate two flat skylights. There would be a small infill extension for a plant/boiler room set between the proposed link and the right-angled projection at the rear of the house. It would be formed in brickwork and would have a flat single-ply membrane roof. The external stone wall of the rear projection would be exposed internally within the plant/boiler room.

Internal Alterations to Lean-to and Outshut

The existing stud partitions within the northern end of the lean-to would be removed. The modern plasterboard ceiling would be removed to open up the roof to the rafters. New stud partitions would be formed to create a utility room. The existing windows within the north wall would be blocked up. The existing doorway within the rear wall would be reduced in width. New partitions would be formed within the outshut for a WC and plant/boiler room. The modern rough plaster wall finishes would be removed and replaced with smooth plasterwork. The false ceiling beams would be removed. Two conservation rooflights would be formed above the rear hall.

Western End of First-Floor

The large bathroom at the western end of the first floor would be subdivided to create an en-suite bathroom and dressing area. New stud partitions would be formed at the loft space of the lean-to for separation.

3.0 Policy Framework

Primary Legislation

3.1 Statutory duties exist under sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') for the local planning authority in considering whether to grant listed building consent or planning permission for development that affects a listed building or its setting to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Development Plan

3.2 The statutory duties are reflected in the *Wiltshire Core Strategy* (WCS), which was adopted by Wiltshire Council on 20 January 2015. Core Policy 57 of the WCS seeks to ensure high quality design and place shaping. Core Policy 58 of the WCS seeks to promote the conservation and, where possible, enhancement of the county's historic environment.

National Planning Policy

3.3 National planning policy relating to the historic environment is provided within section 16 of the NPPF (revised December 2023). It advises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

5.2 Paragraph 205 of the NPPF advises 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. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Any harm or loss to a heritage asset's significance should require clear and convincing justification and needs to be weighed against identifiable public benefits. Substantial harm or loss of a Grade II listed building should be exceptional.

5.3 Paragraph 207 of the NPPF advises where proposals would lead to substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the proposals should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to

achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of four listed criteria therein apply.

5.4 Paragraph 208 advises that where proposals would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

3.4 Paragraph 212 of the NPPF advises that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas or the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance.

National Guidance

3.5 It is advisable that proposals for repair, restoration and alteration should follow the guidance within the *Historic England Advice Note 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets* (HEAN2, February 2016). The document acknowledges (paragraph 3) that the best way to conserve a building is to keep it in use, and that a *'reasonable and proportionate approach to owner's needs is therefore essential'*.

3.6 As a general principle for adaptation, HEAN2 advises as much of the historic fabric and plan form that contributes to the significance of a heritage asset should be retained as possible, with new work ideally being reversible. Harm to significance may be justified on grounds of overriding public benefit that may accrue including maintaining the building in its optimum viable use.

3.7 Section 1 of HEAN2 advises that repairs should follow good conservation practice and consideration should be given to: the loss of historic fabric being minimised and proportionate to the nature of the works; original materials only being replaced where they have failed in their purpose or are beyond economic repair; repairs carried out using materials to match the original in substance, texture, quality and colour; and the use of sympathetic and traditional methods of repair.

3.8 Section 2 of HEAN2 advises that restoration works are those that reveal or recover something of significance that has been eroded, obscured or previously removed. It says, where it is proposed to remove more modern coverings and finishes that are harmful to the significance or the integrity of the building, appropriate materials should be introduced in their place.

3.9 HEAN2 also advises that some of the issues to consider in respect of new additions are proportion, height, massing, bulk, materials and setting, and that new work should not dominate the existing in terms of scale, material or siting. The guidance advises that an assessment of the asset's significance will usually suggest an appropriate form of any extension.

3.10 The setting of a heritage asset is defined on p72 of the NPPF as 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced'. The NPPF advises the extent of setting is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

3.11 Best practice guidance for assessing development affecting the setting of heritage assets is provided within Historic England's *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (GPA3, December 2017). The document advises on p8 that assessment of setting is best undertaken using a staged approach, including identifying the assets that could be affected and the degree to which the settings contribute to significance, before going on to determine the effects of the proposed development on significance.

3.12 The Government's online Planning Practice Guide (PPG) provides interpretation of the policies contained within the NPPF. Paragraph 013 of the PPG clarifies what is meant by the term setting and how it ought to be considered for development management purposes. It highlights that the extent and importance of setting includes visual factors as well as experiences, such as noise, dust, smell, vibration, or the historic relationship between places. The Court of Appeal case involving Kedleston Hall[1] shows that historical, social and cultural matters are relevant to the definition of setting, and that a direct physical or visual connection is not always necessary to form part of a setting.

3.13 Historic England is currently consulting on a draft guidance note entitled Climate Change and Historic Building Adaption. It says in para 81, '*The replacement of windows which do not contribute to the architectural or historic interest of a building with double-glazed windows of sympathetic design, will generally be acceptable'.*

[1] *Catesby Estates Ltd v Steer* (2018), EWCA Civ 1697.

4.0 Heritage Impact Assessment

Replacement Windows

The existing modern windows would be replaced with slim-profile double-glazed timber windows of more sympathetic proportions and detailing resulting in an enhancement to the appearance of the building. The size of the westernmost window on the ground floor would be restored, which would not only reinstate the proportions of that opening but would reinstate consistency to the front elevation. The replacement dormers would improve the relationship with the second floor, making the rooms more usable, and would be of more appropriate design and vertical proportions.

Removal of Door to Lean-to and Insertion of Window

There would be no loss of historic fabric from the removal of the non-original front door of the lean-to. The stone infill and window in its place would be of sympathetic design and detailing. The proposals would improve the circulation within the house and enable the lean-to to become more usable. The main historic front door opening would be emphasised.

Gate Formed within Stone Boundary Wall

There would be no loss of historic boundary wall fabric (as the stone wall is of recent construction). The solid timber gate would be appropriate. The gate would improve circulation and usability of the house.

Lead Flat-Roofed Porch to Lean-to

The open-fronted porch would have a light-weight appearance in a position of low prominence on the side of the lean-to. It would be of suitable scale, design and materials. The canopy porch would provide weather protection and improve usability of the back door.

Two Rooflights within Lean-to Roof

The rooflights would be sensitively positioned, low in number and of appropriate design.

Demolition of Conservatory and Replacement Extension

The replacement of the substandard conservatory with the proposed kitchen/living extension would result in an improvement to the habitability of the house, making it more suitable for modern family living. The extension would be of suitable scale and proportions, enabling it to be subservient to the house. The crispness of the detailing and the large full-height glazed panels would create a distinct contrast with the historic building, further emphasised by the splayed alignment of the extension, thus maintaining the legibility of the house. The angle would maximise views of the garden and the back of the house. The proposed rubble stone walls, ashlar stone quoins, brickwork, vertical cedar cladding and slate would be suitable high-quality materials that would harmonise with the existing palette of materials of the building and would sit comfortably within the wider landscape. The proposed flat-roofed link would provide a low-lying transition with a light-touch impact, and would maintain the prominence of the catslide roof. The proposed plant/boiler room extension would cause a slight reduction in the legibility of the historic rear projection, but this would be mitigated by the light-touch approach to the extension (via its independent, reversible form of construction) and by exposing the external walls of the projection within the plant/boiler room.

Internal Alterations to Lean-to and Outshut

There would be no harm to the special interest of the building from the removal of the modern stud partitions and finishes within the lean-to and outshut or from the blocking up of modern window openings on the rear. The proposed reconfiguration of the layout would not result in harm to historic plan form or fabric. Removing the rough plaster wall finish and false ceiling beams would better reveal the significance of the building. The two conservation rooflights proposed above the rear hall would be small-scale, of suitable design and discreetly positioned and would not be harmful.

Western End of First-Floor

The proposed partitioning of the large bathroom would improve the usability of the first floor. There would be no harm to historic fabric or plan form.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 The recent assessment of significance for Broadmead Farmhouse identified it as a Grade II listed building that is mainly of value as a historic vernacular farmhouse, albeit much altered following a fire in 1989.

5.2 The current proposals have been influenced by the assessment of significance and responses from a recent pre-application enquiry, which were generally supportive.

5.3 The main aspect of the proposals is the replacement of the substandard conservatory at the rear of the house with a single-storey kitchen/living extension. The development would be of suitable scale, design, siting, proportions and materials, and it would not dominate the house.

5.4 In addition, the application proposes replacement of the modern windows with ones of more sympathetic design and detailing and minor modifications to previously altered layout and openings.

5.5 Overall, the proposals would enhance the habitability of the house for modern family living, in turn helping to secure the long-term conservation of the heritage asset.

5.6 The significance of the heritage asset and the contribution made by its setting would be unharmed.

5.7 The proposals would therefore satisfy the policy requirements of the current development plan, which seek to protect the historic environment.

5.8 In doing so, the proposals would sustain the significance of the listed building and ensure its conservation in line with the requirements of the NPPF.