DELEGATED REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/07379
Application Type:	Householder Planning Permission
Site Address:	25 St Paul Street, Chippenham, SN15 1LJ
Proposal:	Loft conversion to use as habitable space, installation of staircase, strengthening floor and insulating and boarding ceiling. Boarding and plastering stud walls. Replacement velux windows (retrospective).
Recommendation:	Planning Permission be GRANTED

PROPOSAL

The application seeks retrospective planning permission for a loft conversion to use as habitable space, insertion of replacement rooflights, the installation of staircase, strengthening floor and insulating and boarding ceiling, as well as other internal alterations.

The proposal will see the conversion of the loft and internal alterations with five rooflights on the rear roof plane. The proposal does not seek permission for any other external changes.

No detail as to the construction of the rooflights has been provided within the submission (the application form incorrectly stating no new external materials are to be used), but photographs suggest the use of a UPVC frame.

As the property is not listed the internal alterations do not in and of themselves require express planning permission.

SITE DESCRIPTION

No 25 is a mid-terrace property situated wholly within the Chippenham Conservation Area (CCA). The host property is an area with a consistent built form. The properties in this area largely rely upon on-street parking.

There are no other relevant policy designations covering the application site.

POLICIES

Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015 (WCS)
Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy
Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy
Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
Core Policy 58: Impact upon Heritage Assets

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of Development
- Conservation Area
- Scale and design
- Residential amenity

CONSULTATION

Chippenham Town Council: No objection

REPRESENTATIONS

No representations received.

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 must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a key material planning consideration. Local planning authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations.

Principle of Development

Decisions on planning applications are made in accordance with the policies contained in the Wiltshire Core Strategy and government guidance.

The principle of domestic extensions, alterations and/or outbuildings within the curtilage of existing dwellings is established as acceptable. As such the principle of development in this instance is considered to be acceptable. However, the detail of the proposals must also be considered against other policies within the development plan.

Conservation Area

The proposal is situated within the Chippenham Conservation Area, and as required by the NPPF, The Act and CP58 of the WCS due consideration has been given to the potential impact upon the heritage asset, in this instance the conservation area.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. In this regard the proposal has complied with Section 72 of the Act, the proposed works and alterations to the property will enhance the conservation area by diversifying the housing stock and helping to provide a modern house which will respond positively to modern living requirements.

CP58 requires development to preserve or enhance the character and setting of the conservation area. The rooflights in this instance are positioned to the rear of the property and are not overtly

visible in the public realm. They do not appear to be of a “conservation” design, and numerous, but in this case, they continue to amount to limited external changes and are not a novel feature in the locality, with other rooflights and other roof alterations being prevalent in the wider conservation area (including the immediate neighbour).

Accordingly, there is not considered to be any detrimental impact upon the Chippenham Conservation Area and no harm caused to its significance as a heritage asset. As such the proposal is considered to be acceptable and is supported and has complied with the requirements of CP58 of the WCS, and the NPPF.

Scale and design

WCS Core Policy 57 requires development to respond positively to the existing townscape and landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, elevational design, materials amongst other things. Sections 12 of the NPPF expects a good standard of design.

The proposal in this instance will not see an increase in the external built form of the property, since the development is largely internal in nature. The only alteration externally as part of this proposal is the installation of the rooflights for which retrospective permission is sought. The internal alterations referenced in the decision notice do not amount to development requiring express planning permission.

Little detail has been provided within the application as to nature of the rooflights which were replaced - indeed, there is little explanation beyond the description of development which claims the rooflights are a replacement, not new. However, despite the rooflights being numerous and somewhat randomly positioned, they are not overtly visible in the street scene and not without precedent, with a variety of Velux style windows, dormers and other roof alterations in the wider locality (including the immediate neighbour).

In their own right, however, the rooflights are not objectionable, being somewhat typical of this form of window, with a UPVC frame that appears to not be white, and therefore suitably recessive in appearance. In this location, the lack of flush, “conservation” style frames is not considered to be unacceptable.

Accordingly, in terms of design and appearance the proposal is in this instance considered to be acceptable and would comply with the requirements of policy CP57 of the WCS.

Residential amenity

Core Policy 57 states that development should have regard to the compatibility of adjoining buildings and uses, the impact on the amenities of existing occupants and ensuring that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself. Section 12 of the NPPF also states that planning decisions should create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Due to the nature of the rooflights and relationship with surrounding properties, it is not considered that the proposal will result in unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy. As such, on balance the proposal is acceptable in terms of amenity in relation to policy CP57 of the WCS.

CONCLUSION

The proposal is considered to be acceptable in respect of size, scale and design. The development is not considered to impact unacceptably upon the character of the area, wider landscape, highways safety, and subject to the imposition of planning conditions, is not considered to have an unacceptable impact upon the amenity or living conditions of the adjoining occupiers. The proposal is therefore in accordance with policies CP57 and CP58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and relevant sections of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

RECOMMENDATION: That Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

See decision notice