CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/08719
Application Type:	Householder planning permission
Site Inspection:	29 November 2023
Consultation ends:	23 November 2023
Case officer:	Helena Carney

Site Address:	The Croft, Wilton, Marlborough, SN8 3SS
Proposal:	Replacing existing windows and re-open two enclosed openings and insert matching windows in them.
Recommendation:	Approve with Conditions

POLICIES

Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted January 2015):
Core Policy 51: Landscaping
Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design & Place Shaping
Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment

Wilton Conservation Area Statement, March 2005

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Sections 16, 66 & 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

ISSUES

• Impact upon neighbour amenity
• Visual amenity
• Impact upon heritage assets
• Impact upon the North Wessex Downs National Landscape [Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)]

REPRESENTATIONS

Grafton Parish Council: support

Wiltshire Council Conservation Officer: see 'Impact upon Heritage Assets' section below for comment.

Third party representations: none received at time of writing.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

• K/45645 - Demolition of modern extension to the main house, extension to the main house, alterations to the barn to provide workshop/storage and living accommodation, refused 25/07/2003
• K/45677/L - Demolition of modern extension to the main house, extension to the main house, alterations to the barn, refused 25/07/2003
• K/50599/LBC - Alterations to existing barn to provide living/workshop/storage accommodation, approved 02/09/2004
• K/50600/F - Alterations to existing barn to provide living/workshop/storage accommodation, approved 02/09/2004
• E/11/0824/FUL - Conversion of barn to form studio & habitable accommodation. Nw building providing storage and ancillary accommodation to existing swimming pool, refused 09/07/2012
• E/11/0825/LBC - Conversion of barn to form studio & habitable accommodation. Nw building providing storage and ancillary accommodation to existing swimming pool, refused 09/07/2012
• 13/00433/FUL - Conversion of barn to form studio and annexe accommodation. New building providing storage and ancillary accommodation to existing swimming pool, approved 03/07/2014
• 13/00436/LBC - Conversion of barn to form studio and annexe accommodation, approved 03/07/2014
• 21/01426/FUL - Conversion of barn to form studio and annexe accommodation, to include bat roosting area (revision of planning application 13/00433/FUL), approved 26/05/2021
• PL/2022/09313 - This application seeks to replace the existing Crittall type windows to the west side and front elevation of The Croft Barn with new timber flush-frame casement windows. As well as reopen two windows in the west side elevation, which have been boarded over, withdrawn

ASSESSMENT

The application site relates to The Croft, which it is a grade II listed dwelling located within the Wilton Conservation Area. Within the residential curtilage lies a barn, which is the subject of this application and is grade II listed in its own right.

The list description for the barn subject of this application states, for means of identification purposes only, the following:

GRAFTON WILTON (north side) SU 26 SE 5/58 Barn west of The Croft

GV II

Barn and attached farm building, C18. Four-bay timber framed barn on high brick sills, weatherboarded with thatched roof. Cart doors facing house in 3rd bay, altered, and opposing doors removed and studded and boarded. Attached building at right angles of similar construction. An important element in the street.

Listing NGR: SU2672561564

The application site also lies within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.

Proposals:
The proposal is to replace existing windows in the south-west and north-west elevations and to reinstate two window openings in the north-west elevation.

The proposals have been amended during the application process to address concerns raised by the council's Conservation Officer, changing the design of window GFW-4 to match the design of window GFW-7. As the amendment was limited to a change of design of one window, it was deemed unnecessary to carry out a formal re-consultation.

Impact upon neighbour amenity:
As the proposed replacement windows in the north-west and south-west elevations will not result in any new or larger openings being made, this part of the proposed development will have a neutral impact upon the occupiers of neighbouring properties, namely 1 & 2 Church Cottages, The Springs and Quackers.

However, the proposal also involves the reinstatement of 2no. windows in the north-west elevation. This elevation faces the front driveway and side elevation of the neighbouring property (Quackers) and therefore the additional windows have the potential to impact upon the occupiers as a consequence of loss of privacy.

However, the proposed new windows will be at least 13m from the side elevation of the neighbouring property and obscured to some extent by a close boarded fence and by existing vegetation that runs along their shared boundary. Furthermore, it is noted that this elevation comprises existing windows and as such the proposed new openings are considered not to result in such a material increase in direct overlooking compared to the existing situation to warrant a reason for refusal.

Visual amenity:
The adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy CP 57 requires a high standard of design in any new developments including alterations or extensions to a dwelling. Development is to create a strong sense of place through drawing on local context and being complementary to the locality. The policy seeks for any new development to positively respond to the existing townscape and effectively integrate into its settings.

There are no concerns from a planning perspective, the proposed style of the replacement windows is considered appropriate for an agricultural building, retaining its outbuilding character. The proposed new openings are considered acceptable as these will reinstate previously blocked up openings.

The proposed works are considered to be relatively minor which will have a neutral impact upon the character and appearance of the outbuilding and host dwelling and also the surrounding area.

Impact upon heritage assets:
The council's Conservation Officer was consulted on the proposals to consider the impact upon the listed building and on the character and appearance of the conservation area and she provided the following comments:

“SITE
The Croft is a grade II listed building within the Wilton Conservation Area, and the barn within its curtilage is also grade II listed in its own right. The barn has planning history for its conversion, refs. 21/02277/LBC & 21/01426/FUL, which renewed permissions granted in 2013, themselves having renewed permissions dating from 2004.

POLICY
National Policy and Guidance:
- Section 16 & 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 – requirement 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.
- Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 – requirement to pay special attention to the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the surrounding Conservation Area.
- The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) outlines government policy, including the historic environment (Section 16). National Planning Policy Guidance provides guidance on making changes to Heritage Assets.
Historic England’s Advice Note 2 – Making Changes to Heritage Assets is also relevant guidance for applying the policies within the NPPF.
Historic England’s “Conservation Principles” provides policy and guidance for the “sustainable management of the historic environment”. Additional guidance is also contained within their publications:
Historic Environment Good Practice Planning Advice Note 2 – Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment
Historic Environment Good Practice Planning Advice Note 3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets (2nd edition)

Local Policy:
- 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.
- Wiltshire 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.”

ISSUES
- Impact on the special interest of the grade II listed building and its setting.
- Impact on the character and appearance of the Wilton Conservation Area.

ASSESSMENT
In 2022 an application (ref. PL/2022/09313) was submitted to replace existing windows and re-open two blocked window openings. There were concerns over the proposed style of windows being too domestic in appearance, along with the need for planning permission for the alterations to the barn (being alterations to an ancillary structure within the curtilage of a listed building): the application was withdrawn, and the current applications seek consent for similar proposals to the listed building.

In relation to the 2022 withdrawn application, there were no objections to the following:

- To the principle of replacing the existing windows with the barn
- To the principle of reinstating the two window openings

Although concerns/comments on the proposals were as follows:
- Style of window – this is changing to something overtly residential in character, a marked change from the existing style, which is more appropriate for the character of this agricultural building. Metal casements replicating the existing glazing pattern should be proposed, although double glazing will be considered.
- Detail of windows – the double glazed window, with spacer unit between the panes (as opposed to a 'true' and correctly detailed glazing bar), are inferior in design and inappropriate for a listed building.
- The two windows that are to be reinstated – these require planning permission, as they are alterations to an ancillary building within the curtilage of a listed building, which is a dwelling house. As they are on a side elevation , there may be a requirement for these windows to be non-opening and obscure glazed, however this will not be assessed under an application listed building consent.

The current applications have revised the proposals from the withdrawn 2022 submission to retain a window style that is more appropriate for an agricultural building, which is considered acceptable as it retains this outbuilding character rather than making the building more domestic in character with multi-paned windows.

There are no concerns from a listed building point of view over the opening of two blocked windows, as the openings already exist behind the timber weatherboarding, and there is no loss of important historic fabric in order to achieve these alterations.

The Crittall joinery details are generally acceptable, although the details do not confirm how the multi-panes are to be achieved on window GFW-4 – these should not be 'applied' to the glass, which I assume is being proposed, and the elevations may need to be revised to remove this detail if this proves to be the case.

The use of double glazing is considered acceptable in this instance, as the replacement of the windows does not involve the loss of historic joinery. This, combined with the use of metal casements, enables the joinery to be slenderer than timber casements, as the metal units take the extra weight and depth of glass without significantly distorting the proportions of window: thereby the visual impact on the listed building will be kept to a minimum".

The above comment regarding how the multi-panes would be achieved on window GFW-4 was brought to the attention of the agent. In response to the concern raised by the council's Conservation Officer, the design of this window has been amended to match that of window GFW-7 which does not include multi-panes (although it will be smaller).

The amended design of window GFW-4 to match that of window GFW-7 is considered to address the Conservation Officer's concern and will be in keeping with the rest of the proposed development.

It is therefore concluded that the proposed development will not cause harm to the significance of the listed building or to the setting of neighbouring listed buildings or cause harm to the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area.

Impact upon the North Wessex Downs National Landscape [Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)]:
As the proposals will be within the main built-up part of the settlement and there will be no encroachment into the open countryside, no harm will be caused to the special qualities of the National Landscape.

Conclusion:
The proposed application seems fitting with regards to scale, design and materials. The proposals are considered acceptable in the context of its surroundings and in accordance with the general criteria set out in the aforementioned policies of the local development plan.

Conditions: (2)

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 and documents:

Application Form
Design & Access Statement
Drawing Number: 19492-LP, Location Plan
Drawing Number: 19492-SP, Site Plan
Drawing Number: 19492-206-RevB, Existing and Proposed North West Elevations, received 12/01/2024
Drawing Number: 19492-207, Existing and Proposed South West Elevations
Drawing Number: 19492-209, Proposed Crittal Window Details
Drawing Number: 19492-210, Proposed Crittal Window Details
Drawing Number: 19492-211-RevA, Proposed Crittal Window Details, received 12/01/2024

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