Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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

Officer's Name: Joe Leesam
Officer's Title: Planning Officer

Application No: **PL/2023/10931 and PL/2024/00204**
Replacement of temporary masonry external sole plate with a permanent traditional timber sole plate
22 High Street, Wedhampton, Devizes, SN10 3QE

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

Recommendations:

X	Comment (for reasons set out below)
	Support in principle subject to amendments to the scheme (as set out below)
	Support subject to conditions (as set out below)
	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 or enhancing listed buildings, their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 also requires the Council to pay **special attention** to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of designated Conservation Areas.

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 207-9 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 203 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.

National Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on interpreting the NPPF.

The 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."

Site and assets considered: The site is a Grade II listed building located within Wedhampton Conservation Area. The property is semi-detached and the neighbouring property is also listed Grade II.

Proposal: The proposal seeks to replacement a temporary masonry external sole plate with a permanent traditional timber sole plate

Relevant planning history: N/A

Issues: impact on the listed building, impact on the setting of neighbouring listed buildings, impact on the conservation area.

Information considered/provided: Paragraph 200 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, these applications are accompanied by a "Design and Access Statement" which provides sufficient information to understand the impact of the proposal and is proportionate to the scope. The requirements of the NPPF are therefore met in this respect.

However, paragraph 201 also provides for the local planning authority to make its own assessment of impact and the following heritage recommendations are offered on this basis.

Significance of assets and contribution of setting (as appropriate): The NPPF defines significance as the "value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be **archaeological**, **architectural**, **artistic** or **historic**. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting." Historic England assesses significance in a similar manner, referring to evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal values of a place.

In this case the significance of the listed building lies largely with its historic fabric and architecture which have significant aesthetic and architectural interest and which contribute to the character of the conservation area.

Assessment: The application is solely concerned with replacement of a temporary concrete sole plate installed to the rear of the building with a permanent timber sole plate.

Details of the type of oak (green or seasoned) for the sole plate is required, together with the type of joint to be used to fix in the repair. Also a brief method statement for carrying out the works.

If the case officer would prefer, I am happy for these details to be conditioned.

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 impact of the proposal on heritage assets will be largely positive, However, further details are required to ensure and sympathetic repair,. These can either be conditioned or requested at application stage. Subject to satisfactory details being submitted (as set out above), the requirements of current conservation legislation, policy or guidance are considered to be met and there is therefore no objection to the approval of the applications.