CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/08934
Application Type:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
Site Inspection:	
Consultation ends:	15 February 2024
Case officer:	Alex Marsh

Site Address:	Elm Farm Cottage, Hankerton, Malmesbury, Wilts, SN16 9JZ
Proposal:	Relocation of electricity meter box and fuse box to external location to front of house and existing box to be replaced. Make good ceiling area to dining area. Replacement of storm-proof windows with single glazed casement windows and painting of soil stack in black
Recommendation:	Approve

Relevant Policies

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 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.

Planning Practice Guidance Historic Environment provides context to 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.”

Historic England Guidance Traditional Windows: Their Care, Repair and Upgrading 2017

Relevant Heritage Assets:

Elm Farm Cottage Hankerton grade II

Site Description:
Elm Farm Cottage is a detached former farmhouse dating from the late 18th century with 19th century alterations. It is two storey built in coursed rubble stone and stone slate roof with gable stone stacks. It has a two-window range with 2 light storm profile casements to main house and a gable porch off set to the right hand with part glazed front door.

It is located about 600 m north of the centre of Hankerton a small hamlet with Church and historically loose set of farmhouses and cottages now with some 20th entry development to the west of the Church around the cross road of Cloatley Road and Vicarage Lane.

Proposal:
Replacement of storm-proof windows with single glazed casement windows. Relocation of electricity meter box and fuse box to external location to front of house and existing box to be replaced. Removing modern no structural beam and Make good ceiling area to dining area.

Relevant planning history:
2020/07726 Glazed extension to the rear; opening up of rear external wall; new window to utility; internal alterations to ground floor and first floor to include new staircase to attic; replacement larger rooflight; new rooflight; new shower room to attic; removal and replacement of existing balcony.

Issues:
The impact of the proposals to the significance of the listed building.
The Information Considered: The application includes a Floor Plans and Elevations, detailed vertical and horizontal window sections at scale 1:1, Heritage Assessment and Significance Assessment and Design and Access Statement.

Consultation: Hankerton Parish Council – No objection 13th February 2024

Significance: 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 architectural, or historic as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 S 1.

‘Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.’ Historic England assesses significance of setting in a similar manner, referring to evidential, historic, aesthetic, and communal values of a place.

In this case significance comes from its vernacular architecture, its form, layout and architectural expression/detailing and use of high-quality design materials which have significant aesthetic and architectural interest.

Discussion of impact of proposals on the identified significance:
The proposal is to replace the existing six 20th century storm profile casement windows with rectangular leaded lights at the front of the property for hardwood flush fitting single glazed casements with rectangular leaded lights.

The proposal information provides a front (south) elevation with the windows identified to be replaced with detailed vertical and horizontal section at 1:1 scale.

The existing windows are non-traditional windows with storm profile and the proposal to replace with a traditional flush fitting casements would enhance the front south elevation and have no harmful impact on the architectural significance of Elm Cottage.

The other minor alterations to the front elevation are to locate the meter box from internally to a location to the right hand side of the porch. The location is discrete behind planting to the flower bed to the front of the property. The applicant has advised it will be sunk into the flower bed to reduce it visual impact.

The other minor works are the previously approved under 20/07726/LBC for the removal of a modern timber beam in the kitchen dining area – it was previously approved to replace this with a thicker section oak beam. However following the removal of the existing thin beam, it was found to be decorative and not structural and this is a revised proposal to just make good the plaster ceiling.

The painting of the downpipe currently light grey to black is not considered to require listed building consent.

Heritage Conclusion and balance:
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 NPPF paragraph 209 allows that a level of harm may be offset by public benefits, which could include conservation benefits.

The proposal for the replacement of six storm profile casement windows to flush fitting casements with single glazing in the same openings on the front elevation is a minor enhancement. The other works of the meter box to the side of the porch and the making good the plaster ceiling the the modern kitchen dining room will have a neutral impact to the significance of the listed building.

The proposal will have a neutral impact on the architectural significance of Elm Farm Cottage including its significant fabric and the proposal is therefore in line with Historic England Guidance Traditional Windows: Their Care, Repair and Upgrading and the National Planning Policy Guidance advice on the Historic Environment.

Conditions: (2)

1 The works for which Listed Building Consent is hereby granted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) 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: Site Location and Block Plan 06.11.2023; Proposed Block Plan 04.12.2023; Proposed Elevations 13.11.2023; Proposed Windows 04.12.2023; Proposed Ground Floor Plan 04.12.2023.

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