CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/10412
Application Type:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
Site Inspection:	12 July 2023
Consultation ends:	01 February 2024
Case officer:	Pippa Card

Site Address:	Perrys Cottage, Green Street, Avebury, Marlborough, SN8 1RE
Proposal:	Repairs to the canopy on the front elevation, Basement ceiling/ground floor repairs and treatment to the timber supporting structure and walls. Fitting of extract ventilation to the basement and smoke detection. Fitting of extract ventilation and a new 140mm square upvc extract grille on the rear ground floor bathroom wall. Minor external repointing in lime mortar to the rear wall and garage. Sovereign timber treatment to the timber flooring on the first floor.
Recommendation:	Approve with Conditions

Perry's Cottage is a grade II listed building dating from the 18th century. A traditional brick and thatched cottage, it was used as a harness maker and saddler's workshop in the 19th century. It is located within the Avebury Conservation Area and World Heritage Site.

The list description states, for means of identification purposes only, the following:

> *House. C18. Sarsen with diaper brick facade on sarsen sill. Thatched roof. Two storeys, 3 bays. Off centre 6-panelled door under a tiled pent roof linking 3-light window in right bay. Three light C18 stone-mullioned window to left bay and 3 and 2-light timber windows to upper floor. Thatch half hipped to right. Early C19 1½ storey half-hipped rear wing to right bay, and a brick lean- to adjoining, across centre bay. The house was the workshop of a saddler and harness maker in the C19, with a tan pit at the rear and a rope walk in front of the building. Harness was hung under the front pent roof.*

Policies

National Policy and Guidance:

Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 – requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing 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 (2023) outlines government policy, including the historic environment (Section 16). Paragraphs 207-209 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 to 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 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 (2015)
- 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 upon the preservation of the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural and/or historic interest.

Assessment

The application is for various proposals, most of which are unrelated. The main issues include the structural integrity of the existing tiled pent-roof on the front elevation (which is currently being supported with temporary acrow props), and an excessive damp and wet rot problem within the basement, affecting the ground floor suspended timber floor structure. Additional minor works include some localised repointing to the rear elevation and chimney stack, installation of 2 extract vents (1 to the basement (front elevation) and 1 to the rear (bathroom)).

The various proposals were subject to pre-application advice given in July 2023, after a site meeting with the Applicant. Written feedback on the various elements was given, as follows:

Basement – obviously this part of the building does have some serious issues going on and is in need of ventilation to address the issue to prevent further deterioration of the building's fabric. It is accepted that the access from street level requires attention, and the wall requires rebuilding. If this only extends to the upper courses (say roughly 500mm or so), then I would not expect an application for the works, but if it transpires that more of the wall requires dismantling in order to be rebuilt (such as taking down to floor level), the works may be in the realms of needing consent: I understand the former situation is anticipated at this stage.

The repairs to timber joists are more involved, and the repairs will involve some repairs to timbers, some retained timbers with new timber alongside, and replacement timbers where they are beyond repair: these works will require consent and a marked up drawing to confirm the works to

each timber will be required as supporting information for an application. It is noted that some repairs have already been undertaken, for safety reasons.

As for ventilation, it is accepted that something is required to improve the internal environment in this part of the building – I am willing to look at options that will achieve this, although those that are visually discreet at likely to be favoured, as these will limit any potential visual harm to the listed building and its character. If it transpires that there is a more invasive but preferred option for performance reasons, then it would be good practice to identify the alternative options considered and discounted in forming a conclusive proposal, for justification purposes. If a new vent can be incorporated into the existing shutter, even if some adaptation was required, this may provide a solution for such an installation. The requirement for consent for such an installation will depend on what is proposed – if something is free-standing and plugged into the mains, then only the works to provide an external vent will require consent. If it is a more permanent fixture into the building (requiring pipework, drain etc), then consent will be required.

Pent roof canopy repairs – the pent roof canopy is an historic feature of the building, having been in situ from at least the 19th century, when the building had a saddler's workshop and harnesses were hung under the pent roof. It is currently being propped with acro props, and therefore requires some repair to the supporting brackets and there are various options to achieve this. The options proposed are either for strengthening works that include new joists to existing rafters, along with triangular plywood 'gusset frames' (number to be confirmed), or a supporting steel running the length of the pent roof. The least invasive option is usually the preferred approach to repairs, and therefore a justification should be put forward to confirm why one option has been chosen over the other as the preferred solution here. It is also noted that the corbel bracket requires repair. I understand that the options are being considered post-site meeting, to confirm the least invasive option that will achieve the required repairs. These works almost certainly require listed building consent.

Chimney stack (rear) – as I understand it, this only requires a small amount of repointing, rather than more onerous works, such as partial taking-down and rebuilding. Small scale repointing of the chimney stack should not require consent in this instance.

Installation of mechanical extract ventilation to ground floor bathroom – the rear elevation is preferred, although it is accepted that the side elevation may be the only viable option for this. Listed building consent will be required, with the location, size and appearance confirmed on plans/elevation photographs.

General repointing works – it will depend on the extent of repointing proposed for the whole building as to whether consent is required. The need for consent is treated as matter of fact and degree – i.e. small areas of localised repointing does not usually require consent, but larger areas of single elevations may require consent. You may decide to include this as part of an application, although elevations highlighting the areas requiring repointing, along with a method statement, will be required.

The application has been submitted in line with discussions during the site visit and written advice.

Basement ventilation – the proposed ventilation unit is a freestanding unit, which requires a rigid plastic pipe (to be fitted to the ground floor joists) and an extract vent fitted through the existing timber 'door' that currently covers the opening to the basement from the outside. The basement has a significant damp problem and the additional ventilation will aid the regulation of the atmosphere within the basement. The only work that requires LBC to enable the ventilation unit to function is the installation of the extract vent and this will have minimal visual impact on the listed building. Any visual harm it may cause by being on the front elevation is outweighed by the requirement to improve the ventilation within the basement, to prevent further damage to the building's fabric caused by the current damp problem.

Basement/ground floor timber joists – the damp problem within the basement has resulted in accelerated deterioration of several main floor joists that support the ground floor structure: these timbers are riddled with damp and wet rot and some require replacing, whilst others are to be treated with topical treatments to improve the situation with the aim of retaining as much existing structurally sound fabric as possible. Fig. 100 Rev A confirms the timbers that are to be replaced.

Pent roof repairs – on the front elevation is a tiled 'pent-roof' overhang, that was used to hang and display harnesses when the building was used by a saddler and harness maker in the 19th century. The roof has had one bracket support removed at some point in the past, presumably when a window was replaced with a unit that opened differently, as the bracket would have impeded the window being opened. This alteration to the supporting frame is now taking is toll and affecting the overall integrity of the support and the temporary solution is being propped by an acrow prop. The structural engineer has looked at various options to rectify the situation, deciding that applying plywood 'gussets' to the existing brackets will provide the necessary support for the structure. This is a solution with minimal intervention that will not be highly visible, as it will be tucked underneath the tiled roof, only becoming apparent when underneath the pent roof itself.

Other works:
The application also includes the installation of an extract vent for the ground floor bathroom (located in a later rear lean-to extension) and localised repointing to the rear elevation and garage building (the latter is historic but of little interest). Timbers that have evidence of wood boring are to be treated with topical applications to protect and preserve the existing timbers.

Consultee Responses
World Heritage Site Officer – no comment.

Avebury Parish Council – support.

Wiltshire Council Ecology – Objection: Further information required.

Case Officer discussions with the Ecologist after the initial response have resulted in clarification of the proposed works, and the following has been stated within an email from the Ecologist (see correspondence on file):

> *My concern with this one was that it didn't appear as though the ecologist understood the extent of the proposed works and therefore weren't able to fully assess the impacts in their report. If as you say no works are proposed to the roof and the basement works are minor*

and do not involve sealing up the entrance, then the risks to roosting bats are likely to be minimal. Could you please put the ecology report under a compliance condition and include the below informative:

Bats
Perry's Cottage is used as a bat roost and there is a risk that the site could support additional roosts. Given the nature of this development, the council considers that if bats were found, mitigation would probably not require further planning permission and a European Protected Species Licence would be forthcoming. Nevertheless, anyone undertaking this development should be aware that bats and their roosting places are protected at all times by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Planning permission for development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation or substitute for the need to obtain a bat licence if an offence is likely. Consideration should be given to obtaining a survey from a professional ecologist before commencing work. If bats or evidence of bats is found at any stage of development, the applicant is advised to follow the advice of a professional ecologist or to contact Natural England's Batline through the internet.

If proposals change to include works to the roof or major works to the basement then additional ecology information is likely to be required prior to determination.

Conclusion
The proposed works to the listed building are required in order to address structural issues or areas deteriorating due to a damp problem within the basement. These works are required in order to protect and preserve the building for the long-term and whilst some intervention into and loss of fabric is required, this is balanced by the need to address the concerns identified. These works will benefit the building and its fabric for the long-term and have been carefully considered to ensure the minimum disturbance is required, thereby keeping the physical impact on the building to the minimum. The works are not considered to cause harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset as they address current issued, which will ensure the preservation of the building's special interest as a whole.

Conditions: (3)

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:

Title	Description	Received Date

Vernacular Report	Appendix 2	1 December 2023
Heritage statement	Appendix 5	1 December 2023
Ecology Report	Appendix 4	1 December 2023
Location plan	Appendix 1	1 December 2023
Key basement plan	Figure 100 Rev A	19 December 2023
Existing details (porch)	Figure 200 Rev A	19 December 2023
Floor plans	Fan location details	19 December 2023
Preferred repair method for porch	Figure 201 Rev A	19 December 2023
Basement fan location	.	19 December 2023
Extract vent location	.	19 December 2023
Design and Access Statement	February 2024	11 March 2024

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

3 The mitigation measures as identified in Section 4.3 of the approved Ecological Assessment carried out by LC Ecological Services Ltd (dated October 2023) shall be carried out in full in accordance with the approved timings detailed in the Ecological Assessment.

REASON: To mitigate against the loss of existing biodiversity and nature habitats.

Informatives: (1)

4 Bats

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