

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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Jocelyn Sage
Senior Conservation Officer
Wiltshire Council Conservation
(South/West)

Officer's Kate Clements
Officer's Title: Planning Officer

Application No: PL/2025/08708

Prior approval Part 3 Class R: Agricultural buildings to a flexible commercial use -
Change of use from agricultural to flexible commercial use
Lower Cowesfield Farm, Cowesfield, Whiteparish, Salisbury, SP5 2QZ

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

Recommendations:

☐	No comment
☐	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. Section 66 (PP) requires 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.

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 214-16 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 210 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."

~~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.~~

The following points are taken from the Historic England document "The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 3" (HE GPA3) that are considered to be particularly relevant:

HE GPA3 Part 1:

"The NPPF makes it clear that the setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset."

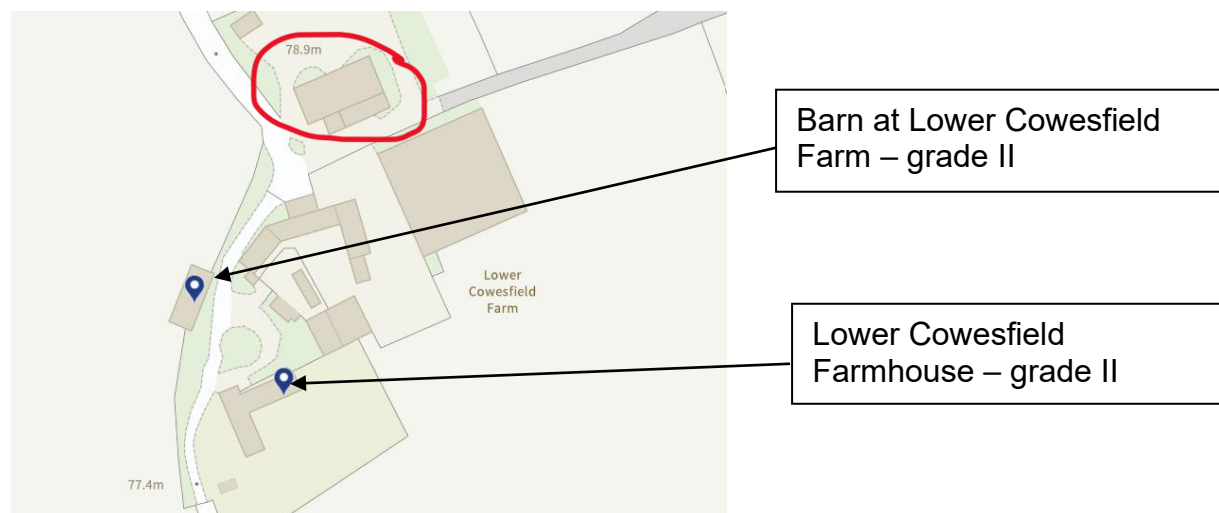
"The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. ...views of or from an asset will play an important part..."

"While setting can be mapped in the context of an individual application or proposal, it cannot be definitively and permanently described for all time as a spatially bounded area or as lying within a set distance of a heritage asset. This is because the surroundings of a heritage asset will change over time."

"The importance lies in what the setting contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance."

Site and assets considered:

The site is near to two listed barns:

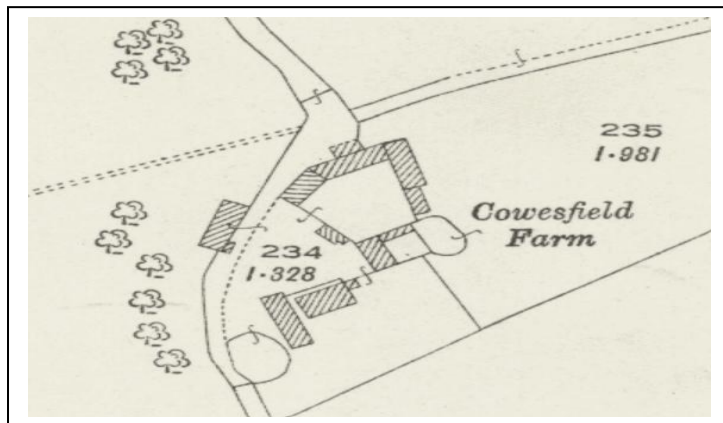


'Farmhouse. Early C17, altered c1800. Flemish bond brick, tiled roof, gable-end brick stacks. 2-storey, 3-window. Central door with 6 reeded panels and fanlight in gabled porch, either side is 2-light casement with segmental head. First floor has 3-brick plat band and three 12-pane sashes. Toothed eaves. Left return is C17 English bond brick with unusual brick and tile string courses to first floor and attic, plank door in gabled porch to right. Rear has three 2-light casements to both floors. 3-brick plat band and toothed eaves, two hipped dormers in roof. Interior has chamfered beam with ogee or long shaped stops. (Unpublished records of RCHM (England), Salisbury).'

And

'Barn. Probably late C17, altered. Weatherboarding on timber-frame and English bond brick plinth, pantiled roof to east pitch, west pitch is corrugated asbestos. 4 bays. Tie-beam roof with raking queen struts to principals and purlins, on jowled main posts, short straight wind bracing. C20 inserted floor. (Unpublished records of RCHM (England), Salisbury).'

Buildings in the curtilage of a listed building (the farmhouse) that pre-date July 1948, could be considered 'curtilage listed buildings'. The barn in question is clearly modern and outside the historic farmyard and as such, is not considered listed or of interest.



1898-1939 OS map

Proposal:

Change of use. I note that no external alterations to the building are proposed.

Issues: impact on the setting of neighbouring listed buildings

Information considered/provided:

Paragraph 207 **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.

Very little information has been supplied presumably because this is a change of use application. Nevertheless, there should have been a heritage assessment considering the setting of the LBs. However, paragraph 208 also provides for the local planning authority to make its own assessment of impact and the following heritage recommendations are offered on this basis.

Assessment:

The barn is existing. However, it was presumably erected using PD rights for agricultural structures and as such, there would have been no need to consider the setting of the listed buildings? Had the barn required consent, it is likely that we (Conservation) would have recommended refusal on the basis of its adverse impact on the setting of the two listed buildings.

However, we are where we are, and given other regimes that facilitate the conversion of functional farm buildings to other uses, such as residential, it would seem unreasonable to refuse this given there are no physical changes to the building.

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 proposals on heritage assets will be neutral On this basis no specific justification is required.