

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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(South/West)

Officer's Name: Mary Rose Scott
Officer's Title: Planning Officer

Application No: PL/2025/09587 PP and PL/2025/09705 LBC
Proposed demolition of modern boiler room, replacement of window with door on north elevation, and internal alterations on Ground Floor, First Floor and Attic.
Gasper Farm, Gasper Street, Gasper, Stourton, Warminster, BA12 6PY

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)
x	No objections except in respect of one rooflight – see below

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.

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."

Site and assets considered:

Gaspar Farmhouse is a grade II listed farmhouse. The list description reads as follows:

'Gaspar Farmhouse GV II Farmhouse. 1718 on datestone to right return. Rubble stone, tiled roof with gable end brick stacks. Two-storey, 3-window. Central brick porch with segmental-headed opening, 6-panelled inner door, 2-light casement either side. First floor has three 2-light casements. Right return has two single-light casements to ground floor, single-light leaded casement to first. Left return has single-light casement to attic, attached C20 altered outbuilding. Two rear wings are single-storey with attics and casements, central stair turret between with half-hipped concrete tiled roof. Interior said to retain original joinery.'

Whilst not specifically mentioned in the list description, the barn, or elements of the barn, were in situ before July 1948. As such, the barn is covered by the listing for the farmhouse and works require listed building consent.

The building is not in a conservation area nor in a registered park and garden.

Heritage information

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.

In this case, whilst the applications are accompanied by a "Heritage and Heritage Impact Statement" which provides sufficient information to understand the impact of the proposals and is proportionate to their scope. The requirements of the NPPF are therefore met in this respect.

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.

Significance of assets and contribution of setting:

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 applicant's architect has assessed the interest of the building to be largely in terms of its aesthetic values ie in its vernacular style, the craftsmanship of its construction and its materials, all of which contribute to its special character. The element which holds the most aesthetic value and therefore contributes the most to the building's significance is the front (south) elevation which faces the public highway.

And its historic values, namely:

Gaspar Farmhouse holds historical value in aiding understanding of the development of the Hamlet of Gaspar and the wider Stourhead Estate. The Farmhouse also helps to illustrate the living conditions of its inhabitants in the past. The elements which hold the most historic value and therefore contribute the most to the building's significance are features such as external walls, partitions, openings and fireplaces. The building's style and construction materials also provide historical information.

Relevant planning history:

ENQ/2025/01243

Removal of modern boiler room to the north-east elevation to improve daylighting and restore historic facade.

Replacement of a modern window with glazed timber door on the north elevation reusing door from within the site. Installation of a new internal staircase between reception 01 and the first floor to improve means of escape Provision of a new accessible ground floor WC in reception 011 to support inclusive use Internal alteration on ground floor, first floor and attic to improve functionality to the space Adaptation of front boundary railings (south elevation) by reducing height to comply with highway visibility requirements set out in condition of application PL/2025/02077

I have included my comments in Appendix 1.

Also subsequent applications

PL/2025/02464 and PL/2025/02077

Carry out alterations to include extensions on rear (northeast) elevation and provision of boundary railings.

Proposal and assessment:

The heritage statement says:

'The majority of the works affect only modern fabric, primarily dating from the mid-1990s conversion of a former open-fronted shed into habitable space (ref: LBC S/1994/1835). Key proposals include the removal of the modern boiler room, replacement of a modern window with new half-glazed timber door, installation of a new staircase, and a range of internal reconfigurations to enhance spatial use and storage.'

Removal of the modern boiler room attached to the south-east end of the farmhouse. No objection, it is not of significance.

Replace window with door on north elevation

This elevation is modern infill of a former barn/cartshed. No objection, subject to acceptable details supplied.

Internal alterations ground floor (proposed ground floor plan 666/02 111 Rev A)

Reception room 1 – install bathroom and stairs. No objection.

Reception room 3 to become kitchen – no objection

Kitchen to become dining/home office with opening opened up between kitchen. No objection.

Utility room – sensitive area ie historic ceiling joists. New partition. Need a condition to say partition shall be scribed around ceiling joists.

Internal alterations first floor (proposed ground floor plan 666/02 112 Rev A)

Regret that bedroom 2 cuts across a chimney breast. At moment is it part of a corridor wall.

No objection to reconfiguration of partitions etc.

Internal alterations attic floor (proposed ground floor plan 666/02 113 Rev A)

Existing partition removed and replaced with new partition (to bathroom) and new door. At preapplication I said:

'Isn't there a partition there already? What is the nature of this partition? I note the PHA justification says 'Form ensuite with new partition and door behind the truss line'. It doesn't mention the existing ie whether it is historic. I would require further justification of this'.

This has been satisfactorily addressed in the heritage statement.

Suggest approval of character of partition and door ie butt and bead boarding perhaps with a ledge and brace door. Condition.

Roof plan

There are two rooflights on the front roofslope. I have previously questioned whether they are authorised (I suspect not). **I do not support these two** as they are an unattractive additions to what could potentially be a visually attractive roofslope. Looking at the proposed floor plan, I can see that one (the smaller) serves the new landing, however, the larger most westerly, serves a bedroom which already has a dormer window. It would also be better if the rooflights were more traditional in design and set flush with the roofslope.



Summary & conclusion:

The impact of the proposals on heritage assets will largely be neutral with some beneficial elements (ie removal of the boiler building). On this basis no specific justification is required however it is considered the works will assist in securing the future use of a heritage asset in support of its long-term conservation. 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 application.

I suggest the following conditions (attached to the LBC decision) if you are minded to grant consent:

- Details of the new door (north elevation)
- Details of the form of the new partition and door within the attic space

