

APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

OFFICER DELGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/09774
APPLICATION TYPE:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
SITE ADDRESS:	Wheelwrights House, 63 High Street, Chapmanslade, Westbury, BA13 4AN
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Amendments and alterations to Kitchen/Dining room including knock through.
RECOMMENDATION:	Refuse

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

Number 65 and Wheelwright House, together with the front walls and railings, is a grade II listed building, listed on the 11 September 1968.



The list description reads as follows:

*'Nos 63 (The Wheelwrights House) and 65 with front walls and 11.9.68 gate piers
GV II Two semi-detached houses. Early to late C18. English bond brick with chamfered
stone quoins and stone plinth, tiled roof, gable end brick stacks. Two-storey, 6-window.
Each house has door with 6 fielded panels in chamfered stone case with flat stone hood on
brackets, two 12-pane sashes in beaded architraves to left and right of door to No 63, up
concrete steps. C20 window to cellar to right. First floor has five 12-pane sashes in beaded
architraves to right, one 3-light cyma-mullioned casement over door to No 65, to left of
straight joint with quoins. Three gabled dormers to attic with 6-pane windows. Left return
has two 3-light cyma- mullioned casements to ground floor and 2-light casement with sash
to one light to first floor, 2-light casement to attic dormer of rear wing. Rear parallel range.
C20 garages attached to rear not of special interest. Rendered flanking walls attached to*

front with weathered stone coping and brick gate piers with moulded stone cappings and tall finials. No 63 was formerly the Wheelwrights Arms Inn’.



Historic England Red Box image. Only image other than the church and school. Clearly a very significant building and once a grand large house (note quoins on left hand side)

Wheelwrights House was likely originally one large house and that it was spilt at some point (post 1939) into two. Number 65 has acquired part of the ground floor (and first floor possibly).

It is within the Chapmanslade conservation area.

PROPOSAL

The proposal is to create a new opening between the kitchen and dining room;
To take down a partition;
To erect a new plasterboard partition within the kitchen;
The removal of the kitchen door (leaving the architrave in situ) and infilling the opening.

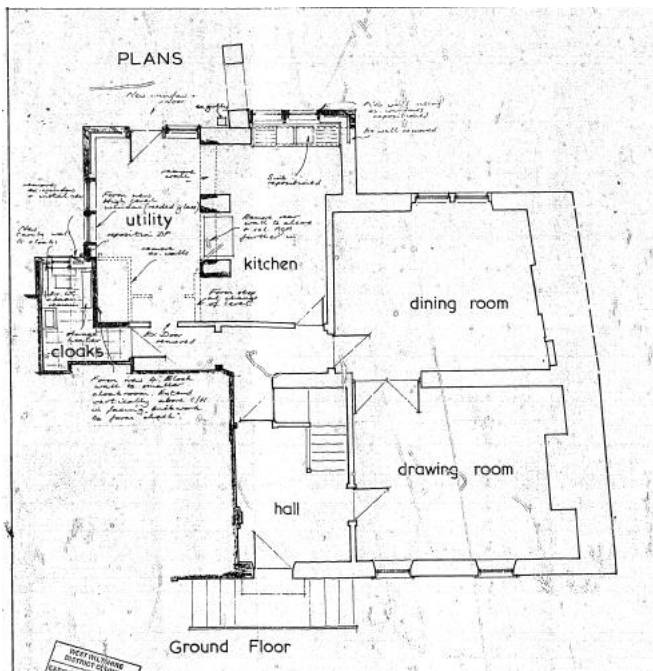
In addition, during the lifetime of the application, the application has been amended to include blocking up an existing opening between the dining room and the living room.

To evidence the proposals we have been provided with a proposed floorplan. Proposed elevations for the new opening between the kitchen and the dining room have also been provided which evidence the retention of a the wall above the picture rail.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
W/78/00519/HIS - Historic apps 1974 to 1983 Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 7/7/1978 – Extension at rear of existing building

The following is the approved floorplan from the above application:



That Wheelwrights House was originally a single building with outbuildings. It is now divided into two houses with number 65 occupying part of the ground floor (and presumably the first floor) at some point post 1939 and before it was listed in 1968.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Legislation

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 16 requires 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.

National Policy and Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out government policy, including 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 213-215 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 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 Practice Guidance provides guidance on interpreting the NPPF.

Historic England Advice Note 2: Making changes to Heritage Assets, illustrates the application of policies set out in the NPPF in determining applications for LBC (and planning permission).

Wiltshire Core Strategy:

Whilst not directly relevant to listed building consent applications, the below policy gives an indication of the Council's approach to development affecting heritage assets:

- Core Policy 58 '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.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Chapmanslade Parish Council: no objection

REPRESENTATIONS

In accordance with the requirements of Section 5(3)(a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 (as amended) publicity is not required for listed building consent to carry out works affecting only the interior of a Grade II (unstarred) listed building.

ASSESSMENT

In accordance with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, special regard has been given to the significance of the listed building, including its architectural and historic interest, and the desirability of preserving both the building and its setting. Relevant policies within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, have also been taken into account. These policies require that any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset must be clearly justified and weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

In order to be acceptable, the application needs to be assessed against the following criteria:

Information considered/submitted

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.

The application is supported by a Design, Access and Heritage statement which assesses the fabric as modern and not of significance (in relation to the partition to be dismantled and the kitchen door). No evidence is supplied for the age of the dining room wall (ie opening up works) or mention of the significance of the floorplan.

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 of significance:

According to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), significance is defined 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 further categorises significance into four key values:

- *Evidential* – the potential of the asset to yield evidence about past human activity.
- *Historic* – the ways in which the asset illustrates aspects of history.
- *Aesthetic* – the sensory and design qualities of the asset.
- *Communal* – the meanings and associations attached to the asset by people.

In this case the significance of the building lies largely with ...

Its architecture;

The use of traditional materials in particular the clay tile roof, the small pane timber sash windows, red brick; stone quoin detailing;

Its plan form;

Its siting, slightly elevated above the road and with a forecourt;

The wall and gatepiers with ball finials;

Its former role as a public house (social, historical interest).

The building makes a strong positive contribution to the character of the conservation area in view of its slightly elevated position such that the full elevation is visible. It also reads as a high-status house in view of its size and the ensemble of different elements, together with its location at the centre of the village.

In terms of the proposed areas of work that are the subject of the present application:

The dining room is a square-plan room of formal character. The formal character arises as a result of its square plan, the stone fire-surround, original panelled door with decorative architrave, the timber window, picture rail and deep frieze. The dado rail is not historic but architecturally appropriate and as such makes a slight positive contribution. The paired double doors into the sitting room are modern, glazed, stained wood and set within the wall without an architrave. As such, they detract from the architectural ensemble.

The kitchen door is a modern glazed door in a historic opening. As such the door is not of interest, however, the opening which leads off the hall, is a positive feature and contributes to an understanding of the original floor layout.

Hall partition. This is believed to be a modern partition, likely introduced when the house was subdivided (as it is shown on the 1970s plan). It is not considered to be of special interest.

The kitchen is 'muddled'. The floor level is higher than that of the hall and dining room. It has been extended in the 20th century. The remnants of a large chimney breast survive. As such, it has some evidential value.

Impact of proposals on the significance and setting of the building/structure:

Understanding the impact of proposed works on a listed building requires a careful and proportionate assessment of how those changes affect the asset's heritage significance and its setting. This includes both the physical alterations to the building itself and any changes to its spatial or visual relationship with surrounding structures or spaces.

The significance of a heritage asset is not static; it is shaped by its architectural, historic, and communal values, and by how these are experienced in context. Therefore, any intervention must be considered in light of the asset's identified significance, with attention given to both potential harm and benefits. Benefits may include repairs that support the long-term conservation of the building, improved energy performance, or enhanced public access and understanding.

This assessment is grounded in the statutory duty under Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which requires special regard to be given to the desirability of preserving the building and its features of special interest. It is also informed by national policy, particularly paragraphs 199–208 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and relevant local heritage policies and guidance.

The dining room. The new opening would entail the loss of fabric. No evidence has been supplied to evidence that this is not historic fabric. The new opening would be taller than the historic opening and no architrave is proposed. As such it would read as a modern opening and sit uncomfortably alongside the existing historic opening. This would be further emphasised by the differential height difference between the two rooms – a step up into the kitchen would be required.

The proposed opening would erode the spatial characteristics of the dining room, creating an open-plan arrangement. The functions of the kitchen would be at odds with the more formal 'polite' character of the dining room. This uncomfortable juxtaposition would be further accentuated by an island unit wrapping around the nib of one of the walls (as shown on the proposed floorplan).

Loss of kitchen door and infilling of the opening. The existing kitchen door is not a feature of interest. The historic architrave would be retained. As such, this element of the proposal is considered acceptable.

New partition within kitchen. There would be no harm to fabric of significance and it is likely that there was a wall in this location in the past. As such, the proposal would reinstate an element of the historic floorplan.

Removal of the hall partition (including door), This is judged to be 20th century fabric of no particular significance.

Impact on Ecology

While Sections 16 and 74(3) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 do not explicitly reference protected species, Local Planning Authorities have a statutory duty to consider potential impacts on protected species when determining applications. This responsibility arises from broader environmental legislation and national planning policy, and must be taken into account where relevant.

		Y / N / NA
(a)	Does the site or proposed development possess/impact on any of the features where protected species are likely to be present (assessed against Natural England's standing advice) and where species are likely to be found?	N
(b)	If yes, has a protected species survey been submitted?	
(c)	If yes, does the survey show a detailed consideration of ecological impacts, wildlife mitigation and the creation, restoration and enhancement of wildlife corridors to preserve and enhance biodiversity in accordance with the standing advice?	

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.

In this case, the proposals will result in harm to the building as a result of the loss of building fabric and an adverse impact on the spatial characteristics of the dining room. The proposals involve only part of the building/setting and could therefore be considered as causing 'less than substantial harm' for the purposes of interpreting the NPPF, but they involve the erosion of the historic floor plan as well as the loss of fabric and should not be seen as being of lesser consequence. Indeed, the wording of the NPPF and the 'special regard' by Section 16 of the Act requires that any level harm caused should be taken seriously.

The proposals, being entirely internal, would have no impact on the Chapmanslade conservation area and as such the works would be in accordance with Section 72 of the Act.

Paragraph 215 of the NPPF allows that a level of harm may be offset by public benefits, which could include conservation benefits. In this case, however, no objective justification has been

provided to demonstrate that the benefits which will result from the works will outweigh the harm caused and, as a result, the proposals fail to meet with the requirements of current conservation legislation, policy or guidance.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Listed Building Consent be REFUSED for the following reasons:

The proposed new opening between the dining room and the kitchen would entail the removal of a significant amount of the existing wall. It has not been demonstrated that this is not historic fabric, and indeed, even if it were, the loss of a significant amount of wall would erode the floorplan of the listed building which is considered to contribute to its interest.

The new opening would clearly be read as a modern opening, and as such, would erode the formal 'polite' character of the existing dining room and compromise the decorative frieze. The formal character of the room would be further eroded by virtue of the height differential between the kitchen and dining room (requiring a step up into the kitchen) and the merging of ancillary 'back of house' functions with a formal reception room.

The perceived harm, although less than substantial, is not outweighed by any public benefits, including securing the heritage asset's optimum viable use.

As such, it is considered that the proposals would fail to preserve a feature of special architectural and historic interest and as such is at odds with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, as well as Chapter 16 of the NPPF and core policy 58.