

APPLICATION FOR FULL-PLANNING PERMISSION & LISTED BUILDING CONSENT CASE OFFICER REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/09999 & PL/2026/00131
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full planning permission & Listed Building Consent
SITE ADDRESS:	The White Hart Inn, Ford, Chippenham, SN14 8RP
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Alterations including replacement and addition of internal doors within living area and replacement of sliding doors to garden
RECOMMENDATION:	Planning Permission be Approved with Conditions Listed Building Consent be Approved with Conditions

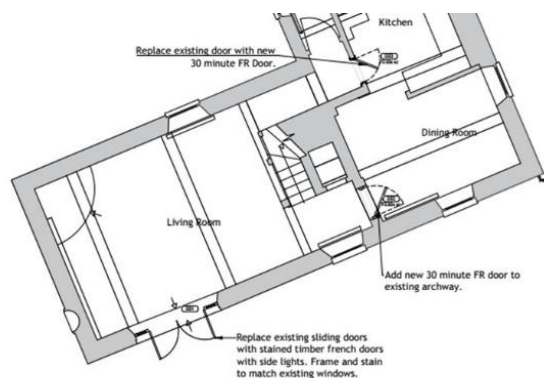
SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The White Hart Inn public house is located at the southern edge of the settlement of Ford, which itself is located just south of the A420, some 6km west of Chippenham. The entire site straddles both the By Brook waterway and rural roads which run south towards Slaughterford, the public house is set to the north of this wider site, and managers flat (to which this application relates) adjoining to the immediate south (rear).

The building is listed (Grade II) and the site falls within the Long Dean – Ford – Slaughterford Conservation Area. The site falls partially within flood zones 2 and 3, with these washing over parts of the building, although not the managers flat itself; it is also within the Environment Agency Watercourse 20m buffer. It is located within the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly 'AONB') and also the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC) washes over the area and Public Right of Way NWRA15 runs from the north of the site to meet the A420, but does not cross the site itself.

PROPOSAL

The application related entirely to the managers flat element of the building, which is located to the rear of the public house. The proposal seeks to replace 1no. internal door and introduce 1no. door into an existing opening, both at ground floor level (off the Kitchen and Dining Room), along with replacement of an existing rear opening; as below:



Proposed Ground Floor Plan

Proposed new internal door openings and replacement of existing sliding doors in rear opening

Plans have been provided showing the proposed new internal doors; it is stated that the existing sliding doors will be replaced with: 'stained timber French doors with side lights, frame and stain to match existing windows.'

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
N/03/03190/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 22/1/2004 – INTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO EXTEND KITCHEN
N/03/03191/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 22/1/2004 – INTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO FORM W.C.
N/08/00265/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 5/12/2008 – Rebuild Derelict Mill Building and Extend Over River to the House
N/08/00266/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 5/12/2008 – Demolish Stables, rebuild derelict Mill Building and Extend Over River to House, Plus Create Doorway to Link From Main House to New Extension
N/08/01073/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Refused Date: 14/7/2008 – Formation of new door opening through existing window and formation of associated bridge. Relocation of stove flue in dining room. Removal of door and section of wall as indicated into dining room
N/08/01072/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Refused Date: 14/7/2008 – Formation of new door opening through existing window and formation of associated bridge. Relocation of stove flue
N/08/01091/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 10/7/2008 – Erection of 5 Signs to Public House and 4 Directional Signs
N/12/01661/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 3/12/2012 – Erection of Agricultural Building for Storage of Agricultural Equipment and For Processing and Bottling Wine, and Provision of Access Track.
N/13/00393/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 3/4/2013 – 1 Non-Illuminated Sign Written Text Direct to Timber Doors, 1 Illuminated Hanging Sign to Existing Bracket, 1 Non Illuminated Totem Sign to Existing Post and Various Non-Illuminated Directional Signs
N/13/00423/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 29/4/2013 – Internal Alterations, Refurbishment and Repairs Following Flood Damage.
N/13/00762/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 28/5/2013 – Relocation of Existing External Gas Tanks.
15/03762/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Withdrawn Date: 8/11/2016 – Proposal for new Outdoor Pizza Oven/Prep Area.
15/03797/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Withdrawn Date: 8/11/2016 – Proposal for new Outdoor Pizza Oven/Prep Area.
16/11236/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 27/2/2017 – Engineering operation for the installation of a new sewage treatment plant

The site has an extensive planning history, much of which is now historic and thus not replicated above (although much of it is included within the submitted Planning & Heritage DAS). It is clear from this that the building and site has been subject to change and intervention over the years.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Statutory 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 Planning Policy:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- National Design Guide

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).

Historic England Advice Note 18: Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency, provides advice in support of consistent decision making on approaches to improve the energy efficiency and support carbon reduction of historic buildings, whilst conserving their significance.

Development Plan:

The development plan for Wiltshire comprises the *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)* (adopted January 2015) and any made neighbourhood plans, which remains the principal statutory planning document guiding development across the county. In line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Though the development plan is considered as a whole, those parts deemed to be particularly relevant to this application are listed below:

The adopted *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)*, with particular regard to:

- Core Policy 41 Sustainable Construction and Low-Carbon Energy;

- Core Policy 50 Biodiversity and Geodiversity;
- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping;
- Core Policy 58 Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment;

Draft Wiltshire Local Plan Policies

The draft Local Plan is currently going through Examination and at this stage is subject to unresolved objections. As such, the policies contained within that draft Local Plan are considered to hold only limited weight.

Neighbourhood Plan: There is no Neighbourhood Plan for the North Wraxall Parish

Supplementary Planning Documents and other Guidance:

- Wiltshire Design Guide (adopted April 2024)

ISSUES

The main issues that need to be addressed in this case include:

- Whether the development is acceptable in principle (CP 1 and 2)
- Whether the scheme constitutes high quality design (CP 57)
- Whether the scheme would preserve or enhance the historic environment (CP 58)
- Whether the scheme would have an acceptable impact upon the Green Belt (NPPF Chapter 13)

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

North Wraxall Parish Council: No comments received

WC Conservation: No comments received

REPRESENTATIONS

In accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), and Section 5(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 (as amended), the application was publicised by way of:

- Neighbour notification letters sent to adjoining and nearby properties;
- A site notice displayed near the site;
- An advertisement placed in the local press.

These methods were used to inform interested parties and provide a period of 21 days for comments to be submitted. No representations were received with regard to this application.

ASSESSMENT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

In accordance with this statutory requirement, this application has been assessed against the relevant policies of the Development Plan, including the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and, where applicable, any made Neighbourhood Plans. Consideration has also been given to the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as a material consideration in the assessment.

Principle of Development

Policy Context

Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy of the WCS establishes a hierarchy of settlements to guide where development should be focused. The policy prioritises growth in: Principal Settlements (e.g. Chippenham), Market Towns, Local Service Centres, Large and Small Villages and then Outside the defined settlements, where development is strictly controlled and generally not supported unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Assessment and Conclusion

In this instance no additional built form is proposed, and alterations to an existing building are generally acceptable in principle, with alterations to listed building being subject to particular scrutiny in terms of design and heritage impact.

Design and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

Policy Context

Core Policy 57 of the WCS requires high-quality design that: enhances local character; responds to the natural, historic, and built environment; retains important features (e.g., trees, hedges); supports sustainable construction and compatibility with surrounding uses; and creates safe, legible, and accessible spaces. Similarly, Section 12 of the NPPF emphasises design that is: visually attractive; functionally effective and contributes to the quality of the built environment. The Wiltshire Design Guide encourages sensitivity to local character, materials, and architectural styles and supports modern living standards while maintaining aesthetic and functional quality.

Set within the context of Section 15 of the NPPF, Core Policy 51 relates to landscape character and requires that development protects, conserves and where possible enhances landscape character and: *"... must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character..."*

Assessment and Conclusion

The internal openings proposed will have no impact on the character and appearance of the area, and in terms of the detail of the design, this is considered in the heritage section below. Similarly, the changes to the rear elevation are considered to be entirely appropriate in terms of design and appearance and as such, the application complies with Core Policy 57 and Section 12 of the NPPF. There are no landscape impacts arising from the proposal.

Impact on Heritage Assets

Policy Context

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 (Listed Building Consent) and Section 66 (Planning Permission) 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 Act 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 for planning. Chapter 16 of the NPPF 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the Government's high-level policies concerning heritage and sustainable development. In particular:

Paragraph 208 requires LPAs should “avoid or minimise any conflict” between the heritage asset’s conservation (which includes achieving its optimum viable use) and any aspect of a proposal. Paragraph 210 requires local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable new uses and of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Paragraphs 212 requires “great weight” to be given to an asset’s conservation “irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.” Paragraph 213 advises that harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should require “clear and convincing justification”. Paragraphs 213-215(214-216) require a balanced approach with any harm which would be caused being weighed against the potential public benefits which might be achieved.

The 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 and non-designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner appropriate to their significance and encourages proposals which improve the condition of heritage assets at risk.

The Council’s Core Strategy CP 57: Ensuring high quality design requires a high quality of design in all new developments. The policy requires applicants to “demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire through (amongst other things) responding to the value of the natural and historic environment and being sympathetic to and conserving historic buildings and landscapes. Development is required to respond positively to the existing in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate the building into its setting.

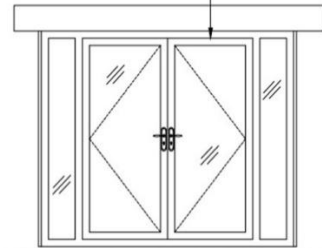
Assessment

The proposed internal openings have been appropriately and sensitively designed, as evidenced on the submitted Door Detail drawing, which shows a frame to be inserted inside of the existing archway for the new opening, and replacement solid timber fire door to the existing opening.

In terms of the external rear opening, the photograph below shows the current detail and arrangement of this, showing a sliding door. This is proposed to be replaced with double French door and sidelights, as per the extract from the submitted elevation drawing:



Replace existing sliding doors with double French door with side lights. Double glazed with timber frame, stained to match existing.



These are to be timber framed and stained to match existing, and clearly show the retention of the existing wooden lintel.

Conclusion

The proposed works are not considered to cause any harm to the listed building, nor to the designated Conservation Area. In the context of Section 16 of the NPPF, with no harm being caused there is no requirement to demonstrate any public benefit and as such the application complies with Core Policy 58 and Section 16 of the NPPF in terms of heritage impact.

Other Issues

Given the nature of the application proposal, it is not considered that **ecology, highways or flooding / drainage** issues are raised. An informative can be added regarding the potential presence of bats, although the works themselves are not considered to pose any particular risk to this protected species.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

At the heart of the NPPF there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development requiring local planning authorities to approve development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; and where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless (taken from paragraph 11d of the NPPF):

- the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing development proposed; or
- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole;

The principle of development is considered acceptable when assessed against the settlement strategy of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the emerging Local Plan.

The proposal is broadly compliant with relevant local and national planning policies in respect of design and heritage matters, and there are no other planning issues raised by the

application, including residential amenity, landscape, highway safety, flood risk and drainage, ecology and biodiversity, and environmental impacts.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered acceptable in planning terms and in accordance with the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework, and all other relevant material considerations and is thus recommended for approval accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Planning Permission be GRANTED, subject to conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning 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:
 - 9364 – 100: Site Location and Block Plan:
 - 9364 – 107: Existing and Proposed Ground Floor Managers Flat Plan (Part Plan)
 - 9364 – 108: Existing and Proposed Managers Flat External Elevations:
 - 9364 – 105: Internal Door Details:(received 24/12/2025 unless otherwise stated)

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

3. The materials to be used in the alterations to the openings on the external elevations of the development hereby permitted shall match in material, colour and texture those used in the rear (south) elevation of the existing building.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Listed Building Consent be GRANTED, subject to conditions:

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 works hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
- 9364 – 100: Site Location and Block Plan:
 - 9364 – 107: Existing and Proposed Ground Floor Managers Flat Plan (Part Plan)
 - 9364 – 108: Existing and Proposed Managers Flat External Elevations:
 - 9364 – 105: Internal Door Details:
- (received 24/12/2025 unless otherwise stated)

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

3. The materials to be used in the alterations to the openings on the external elevations of the development hereby permitted shall match in material, colour and texture those used in the rear (south) elevation of the existing building.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

INFORMATIVES

Any alterations to the approved plans, brought about by compliance with Building Regulations or any other reason must first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before commencement of work.

The applicant is requested to note that this permission does not affect any private property rights and therefore does not authorise the carrying out of any work on land outside their control. If such works are required, it will be necessary for the applicant to obtain the landowners consent before such works commence. If you intend carrying out works in the vicinity of the site boundary, you are also advised that it may be expedient to seek your own advice with regard to the requirements of the Party Wall Act 1996.

There is a low risk that bats may occur at the development site. Many species of bat depend on buildings for roosting, with each having its own preferred type of roost. Most species roost in crevices such as under ridge tiles, behind roofing felt or in cavity walls and are therefore not often seen in the roof space. Bat roosts are protected all times by the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (as amended) even when bats are temporarily absent because, being creatures of habit, they usually return to the same roost site every year. 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. If bats or evidence of bats is found during the works, the applicant is advised to stop work and follow advice from an independent ecologist or the applicant is advised to follow the advice of a professional ecologist or to contact Natural England's Batline through the internet.

The applicant should note that under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) it is an offence to disturb or harm any protected species including for example, breeding birds and reptiles. The protection offered to some species such as bats, extends beyond the individual animals to the places they use for shelter or resting. Please note that this consent does not override the statutory protection afforded to any such species. In the event that your proposals could potentially affect a protected species you should seek the advice of a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist and consider the need for a licence from Natural England prior to commencing works. Please see Natural England's website for further information on protected species.

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan, if one is required in respect of this permission would be Wiltshire Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. For further information on exempt developments please refer to:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because one or more of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements is considered to apply.