

# APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

## OFFICER DELEGATED REPORT

|                               |                                                                    |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>APPLICATION REFERENCE:</b> | PL/2025/09574                                                      |
| <b>APPLICATION TYPE:</b>      | Listed Building Consent (Alt/Ext)                                  |
| <b>SITE ADDRESS:</b>          | Small granary, Countess Farm Amesbury SP4 7AS                      |
| <b>DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:</b>  | Remove roof covering and cladding to enable inspection and repairs |
| <b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>        | Approve subject to conditions                                      |

### SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

Countess Farm sits adjacent to the roundabout at the A303/A345 junction in Amesbury. The farmhouse and its flanking courtyard walls are grade II listed, and four separate grade II list entries cover surviving historic farm buildings – large and small granaries, barns and stable. The site is outside of the Amesbury Conservation Area but is within the Stonehenge & Avebury World Heritage Site.

The small granary sits just outside of the historic working yard, now close to modern housing on Countess Road. It has suffered from significant deterioration and partial collapse.

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

*6/36 Small Granary to north of large barn at Countess Farm (formerly listed 31.12.74 as Outbuildings to Avon School)*

*GV II Granary. Later C18. Timber framed and weatherboarded on 4 x 3 staddles, others added. Tiled roof. Boarded door over raised platform on west face. Vents in gables. Roof half hipped. Interior: Ground floor divided by two chamfered cross beams with check and scoop stops. Three bins in north bay. Upper floor has central truss with queen struts to single purlin and wind braces. Ceiling underdrawn in plaster. Grain bins. One of an important group of later C18 farm buildings at Countess Farm (q.v.).*

### RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None. There have been applications for works to other buildings within the group but none directly relevant.

### PROPOSAL

Removal of the roof covering and the external cladding is proposed, along with scaffold for support and access.

### 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.

### 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.

Section 14 of the NPPF addresses the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change.

Paragraph 167 advises that "Local planning authorities should also give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights).

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 policies give an indication of the Council's approach to development affecting heritage assets:

- Core Policy 57 '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.
- 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. Impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

### **CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

Amesbury Town Council – "support"

Historic England – *“Historic England provides advice when our engagement can add most value. In this case we are not offering advice. This should not be interpreted as comment on the merits of the application. We suggest that you seek the views of your specialist conservation and archaeological advisers. You may also find it helpful to refer to our published advice at <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/find/>”*

World Heritage Site team – *“Thank you for consulting the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site Coordination Unit. It is our assessment that this proposal does not present any negative impacts to the WHS and its Attributes of Outstanding Universal Value.”*

Ecology – Slight concern at two rather than three bat surveys, but satisfied these are sufficient to establish the species present and to specify mitigation. Note that the mitigation for this application must be separate from that approved in PL/2025/07524. Recommend a lighting condition and informative regarding a licence for the work [from Natural England]. Advise that BNG requirements need consideration. Screened out of Appropriate Assessment the River Avon SAC and Salisbury Plain SPA.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

In accordance with the requirements of Section 5(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 (as amended) the application for listed building consent was publicised by way of:

- A site notice displayed near the site;
- An advertisement placed in the local press.

These methods were used to inform interested parties and to allow a statutory consultation period of **21 days** for representations to be submitted.

Below is a summary of the representations received during the consultation period. In accordance with the provisions of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, only matters relevant to the consideration of the building’s special architectural or historic interest have been taken into account in the assessment of this Listed Building Consent application.

None received.

## **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.

### 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 granary forms part of a large C18 farmstead of which most buildings are listed individually for their early date and degree of survival, and which forms an exceptional grouping with none of the typical modern agricultural interventions. The site's relative proximity to Stonehenge and synonymous roundabout have long given it a degree of prominence and public awareness, although several of the buildings are not readily seen from the public realm.

The granary and its condition are described in a full site report from 2000. Although concerns were raised, access was considered satisfactory to inspect and photograph extensively. The subsequent failures mean that the building is too dangerous to enter or inspect from below and the aim of the work is to facilitate closer inspection by permitting visibility from above. The building will be secured by scaffold prior to the works. Removing the tiles will greatly reduce the load on the failed elements, while the battens hamper visual inspection, and many no longer serve their function properly. Not noted, but clearly necessary, will be the loss of the remaining lath and plaster roof lining. This lining is described as 'much of which has deteriorated' with a photograph in the 2000 report and it seems unlikely that any will now survive in a salvageable state. The proposed removal of cladding will be partial rather than complete, again to allow for adequate inspection of the structure and in preparation for likely repairs.

The tiles and boarding capable of reuse will be salvaged for the purpose. Much of the existing boarding is C20 replacement.

The repair scheme will be designed with the input of a structural engineer and details will be provided to the local planning authority. This will be required by condition, both to ensure that the works are appropriate and that a proper record of the works will be archived. In the likely event that those works involve substantial replacement of fabric and/or significant reconstruction then a further application will be required in order to engage the statutory consultees, Historic England and the national amenity societies.

A condition regarding ultimate reinstatement of the roof tiles and cladding is appropriate, as the removal and covering with tarpaulin must be a temporary situation. Allowing for implementation of the works in this application, the subsequent survey, scheme design, consideration of the design by the local planning authority and potential delays of a further application, a finite deadline of three years is considered realistic and reasonable.

### 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?                       | Y          |
| (b) | If yes, has a protected species survey been submitted?                                                                                                                                                                                            | Y          |
| (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? | Y          |

### Comments (if any):

The ecology consultee has responded to confirm that the scheme is acceptable subject to a condition regarding lighting and an informative about licensing the works. The works do not meet the criteria for BNG requirements.

### **CONCLUSION**

The works are considered to be clearly justified by the need to address critical structural failures. The ecological mitigation is considered acceptable.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That Listed Building Consent be GRANTED, subject to the following conditions:**

LB 3yrs

Plans list

Details of structural survey and proposed solutions to be provided

Timeframe for tile and cladding reinstatement (with matching new where required)

Ecology lighting

Ecology informative