

APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

OFFICER DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/01955
APPLICATION TYPE:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
SITE ADDRESS:	Old Manor House, Milston SP4 8HT
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Insertion of spiral stair from 1 st floor to attic
RECOMMENDATION:	REFUSE

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The Old Manor House is a grade II* listed building standing in a small cluster of historic buildings with the church, numerous graveyard monuments, and Addison House, all of which are also listed.

The house stands to the north of the church, abutting and directly overlooking the churchyard on its southern rear elevation. Built of flint with stone dressings, windows are a mix of stone mullioned and vertical sliding sashes, the roof has coped stone gables and clay tiles. A substantial stone chimney sits between the south and north ranges, while another sits against the N front towards the west serving the principal reception room and bedroom. Some parts of the eastern elevation have been rendered. A single-storeyed range of a variety of dates, including late C20, runs along the eastern roadside boundary. Internally the building retains its original two storey C17 staircase, floor and roof structures (where visible; each room has a substantial historic transverse beam), fireplaces, doors and panelling. The house was also one of a cluster of fine manor houses in close proximity (most notably Syrencot) that hosted Winston Churchill, King George VI and others in the planning for D-Day in 1944. The building was first listed in 1953 which is unusually early, and which emphasises how remarkable the building was known to be.



North front from NW (2026)

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

*GV II**

Manor house, 1613, for Roger Pinckney, possibly incorporating earlier work, restored later C19 and C20. Flint with limestone dressings. Two storeys and attic. 'L'-plan comprising a 3 bay range with central hall, drawing room to west, and dining room in forward wing on left. Entrance in re-entrant angle, a 6 panelled door. Two and 3-light

stone-mullioned windows with hoodmoulds, those on first floor replaced in C19, and canted bay windows inserted on ground floor of north and west gables. Coped gables and datestone reading 1613 RP on north gable. Stack with 5 diagonally set shafts. Interior: Ground floor altered. Dog-leg stair in recess off hall between kitchen and dining room, early C17, with two turned balusters to each bracketed tread, and fluted stanchions. First floor subdivided into bedrooms by C17 panelling of various types. Roof has straight wind braces to central truss only.
Listing NGR: SU1622645232

An additional comment on the list entry by a member of the public refers to a notable artist, Theodora Noyes (1864-1960) living and working at the house from the mid-1890s. Biography online suggests she moved from London in 1894 and, via Torquay, was in Sutton Veny (Wilts) by 1906. (Pre-Raphaelite and Victorian Art website: [The Kissed Mouth: Come on, Feel the Noyes](#))

PROPOSAL

Installation of a spiral staircase from the principal bedroom to the attic.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

S/1988/1633 ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS OF OUTBUILDINGS TO CREATE NEW SINGLE STOREY RESIDENCE Approved

S/1991/0516 Utility room extension Approved

S/1991/0596 Utility room extension Approved

There is no other known site history.

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) August 2026 sets out government policy, including in respect of the historic environment.

Chapter 20 - *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*, recognises heritage assets as an irreplaceable resource. Heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, with harm avoided unless there is a clear and convincing justification. Decision-makers are required to apply a balanced approach, giving substantial weight to the conservation of heritage assets and weighing any harm to significance against the public benefits of the proposal.

National Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on interpreting the NPPF.

NPPF policy HE4.2 states that “Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (including from development within its setting) should have a clear and convincing justification in accordance with the policies in this chapter”.

HE5.1: “Development proposals affecting heritage assets should be accompanied by an assessment of the significance of the assets affected (including any contribution made by their setting) and of the potential effect of the proposal on their significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is necessary to understand the potential effect of the proposal on their significance. The relevant historic environment record should be referred to in making this assessment, and appropriate expertise employed where necessary.”

HE5.3 requires the LPA to assess the scheme to identify harm or positive effects.

HE5.4: “Decision-makers should be satisfied that assessments accurately reflect the effects on heritage assets caused by development proposals.”

HE6.1: “When considering the potential effect of a development proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, substantial weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential effect amounts to a positive effect, harm, substantial harm, or total loss of its significance.”

HE6.4: “Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal. Important public benefits can include securing the long-term reuse of a vacant or underused listed building, and enabling energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed.”

Historic England’s *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008) provides policy and guidance for the “sustainable management of the historic environment”. Additional guidance on the application of policies set out in the NPPF is contained within their publications:

- Historic Environment *Good Practice Planning Advice Note 2 – Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* (2015)
- Historic Environment *Good Practice Planning Advice Note 3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets 2nd edition* (2017)
- Historic England *Advice Note 2 – Making changes to Heritage Assets* (2025)
- Historic England *Advice Note 18 – Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon*

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. The works are internal and do not impact on the setting of other listed buildings; the site is not in a conservation area.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Milston Parish Meeting – no response received

Historic England – detailed response concludes:

"Historic England has concerns regarding the application on heritage grounds. These concerns relate to the likely loss of significant historic fabric, change to historic planform and introduction of unsympathetic materials resulting from the insertion of the spiral staircase, as well as the impact of the staircase design on the character of the listed building interior."

"We consider that the issues and safeguards outlined in our advice need to be addressed in order for the application to meet the requirements of paragraphs 208, 212, 213 and 215 of the NPPF."

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.

Salisbury Civic Society has commented on the application, noting that their Development and Planning Committee had voted unanimously to object due to the physical harm the installation had inevitably caused, the lack of justification and lack of public benefits.

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 20: *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

Policy HE5 of the NPPF requires applicants to assess the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including the contribution made by their setting, and to identify the likely effects of the development on that significance. Sufficient information should be provided to enable a clear understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and its setting, and the impact of the proposal upon it.

Decision-makers must be satisfied that assessments accurately reflect the effects on heritage assets caused by development proposals. The application provides a very limited assessment of the building's heritage significance that does not provide the level of information expected by the NPPF and required in order to assess fully the impact of proposals. There is no assessment of the fabric directly affected by the installation, nor of the impact on the character and circulation of the building.

The following heritage recommendations are made on the basis of the local planning authority's own assessment of the significance of the heritage asset and the impact of the proposals, and with particular reference to the response from Historic England.

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:

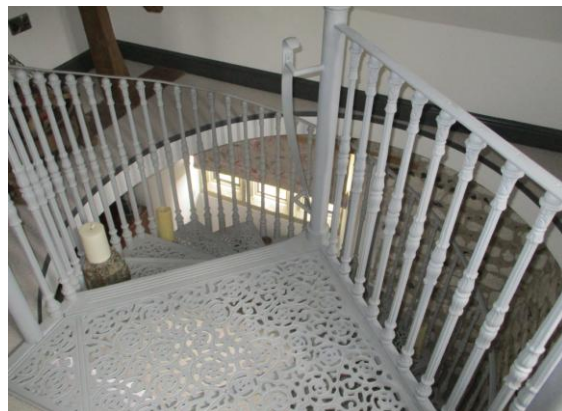
- *Evidential* – the potential of the asset to yield evidence about past human activity.
- *Historic* – the ways in which the asset illustrates aspects of history.
- *Aesthetic* – the sensory and design qualities of the asset.
- *Communal* – the meanings and associations attached to the asset by people.

In this case, the significance of the building lies in its early date, the high degree of preservation of many parts of the building, its representation of craftsmanship and construction with flint in a manner rarely seen since the C17. Its close physical association with the church and Addison House (the former rectory, late C17) makes an important group that form the very essence of an English rural village. Another layer of significance lies in its personal associations and role in

WW2. Whether the king or Churchill stayed overnight is unknown but if they had it would surely have been in the principal bedroom...no significance is attributed to this, but a more thorough heritage assessment might have confirmed.



Estate agents' photos





Officer photos 2026

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 policies HE4-9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and relevant local heritage policies and guidance.

The spiral stair sits in the southwest corner of the principal bedroom above the drawing room. This is a large bedroom with an unusually large (for a first floor) brick fireplace in its north wall, three-light stone mullioned windows to its west and south walls, while the eastern wall is lined with C17 panelling. The fireplace lintel has been raised and replaced on rebuilt and raised brick jambs, apparently recent work (certainly post-listing) revealing the chalk blocks lining the lower parts of the flue; the remainder of the brick lining appears to be pre-C19. A large beam spans from above the east jamb of the fireplace to the eaves plate and lintel over the southern window, with the staircase framed by this beam and a smaller later addition. The ceiling material is unknown but from the number of spotlights it may well be plasterboard or similar.

The detail drawings provided show that the new stair sits on a steel beam introduced into the 1st floor floor. This beam spans from a principal beam to the chalk block lining of the flint walls. This will have required lifting and probably cutting of several floorboards. No details have been provided and the boards are carpeted, so the nature and quality of these boards is not known: it is perfectly possible that they were wide early boards (i.e. pre-Victorian) where particular care would need to be taken with lifting and cutting in order to limit the damage to important fabric, and

in some cases to require the boards to be numbered and relaid in the same positions. No information has been provided regarding this work.

The stair opening through the 1st floor ceiling/attic floor is a 1.7m diameter circular hole. A new steel has been inserted between the main beam and the wall (at ninety degrees to that in the 1st floor floor), and the space cleared of earlier structure. No photographs, drawings or other information has been submitted nor located elsewhere to detail the construction here, but there is no known reason to presume it was anything other than the original C17 joists, perhaps six or seven in number measuring 2m each. The attic must have been boarded throughout and floorboards have also been lost: these could have also been C17, attic boards tend to survive longer than those at 1st floor.

The new stair itself is of a Victorian open style with slim metal handrails. The introduction of this semi-industrial style feature into a space which has a much earlier and genuine C17 character is unsympathetic, visually intrusive and disrupts the circulation or flow of the house.

HEAN2 para 45 advises "The plan form of a building is frequently one of its most important characteristics and internal partitions, staircases (whether decorated or plain, principal or secondary) and other features are likely to form part of its significance. Indeed they may be its most significant feature. Proposals to remove or modify internal arrangements, including the insertion of new openings or extension underground, will be subject to the same considerations of impact on significance (particularly architectural interest) as for externally visible alterations."

The stair overlaps the southern window of the bedroom, disrupting the character and experience of the space further. The circulation of the house from ground floor to attic on the original stair is one of the most remarkable features of the building and to change that is in itself harmful. The change of character in the attic is equally striking, introducing metal railings and a large hole in the floor where previously the space was only accessible by the original stair.

A small extract provided of a floorplan prior to the works shows that there was a small enclosure in the SW corner of the bedroom: no photographs or description are available and it is unknown whether this was of historic interest or a modern addition.

The ceilings in the attic are mostly at the upper purlin level, but there is none above the spiral stair, suggesting it may have been removed during what appears to have been a substantial refurbishment of the attic. Similarly the ceiling is absent in bedroom 5, and the gable wall of both open areas has had its plaster removed to expose bare chalk block and flint; this feature treatment has also been brought into the 1st floor bedroom with the walls immediately adjacent to the new stair stripped of plaster. This may be an interesting quirk to some but it is also harmful to the elegant historic character of the room to introduce unfinished masonry in this fashion.

The application states that the stair was installed in order to provide access to the attic for elderly parents. It does not state why this access was particularly desirable, and there are four bedrooms and two shared bathrooms on the first floor. The attic plans show bedrooms 5 and 6 with shower ensembles, and a shared shower room near the spiral stair.

The NPPF and case law make it clear that personal benefits do not provide acceptable justification for harmful works to listed buildings. No public benefits have been put forward or identified.

It is not clear for what reason the elderly parents required an easier access to the attic, nor why a spiral stair would be suitable for the purpose, nor why alternative less intrusive solutions had been rejected. Stairlifts, and on occasion through-floor lifts, are regularly proposed to improve mobility around historic properties temporarily. Stairlifts can usually be installed with no irreversible damage, bar a few screw holes in stair treads. Lifts, although far more rarely acceptable, have been permitted where the harm might be deemed negligible and largely reversible – by retention of the cut joists and boards for reinstatement on removal, for instance. It is also noted that through-floor personal lifts can require smaller openings than has been formed in this case. Typically such rare permissions are granted for the duration of occupation of the person requiring the lift, and require reinstatement within a set period of that occupation ceasing. In this case, the persons for whom the stair has been installed are believed no longer to be resident and the property has been for sale since 2023. There are therefore no personal circumstances that might be argued to support retention of the staircase for a temporary period.

The works are strongly believed to have brought about the loss of significant historic and original fabric and may have also caused avoidable damage to historic floorboards. The impact on the principal bedroom and that of the attic is a significant disruption of its well-preserved character and the original circulation of the building.

Historic England comment that *“The application does not explain the significance of the area of the house affected by the inserted staircase, either in terms of its fabric or planform, or the impact on this significance, and no justification is provided for the installation of steels and a spiral staircase design which are unsympathetic to the character, appearance and historic materials of the listed building”*.

Impact on Ecology

While Sections 16 and 72 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?	
--	--	--

Comments (if any):

CONCLUSION

It is considered that the proposal causes, and has caused, harm to the historic fabric, circulation, character and significance of the listed building, contrary to the aims of section 16 of the Act, the NPPF and CP58, by virtue of the loss of a large section of likely original C17 timber floor structure, as well as damage to or loss of historic floorboards, the introduction of steel beams and the unsympathetic design, materials and position of the new stair, without clear and convincing justification (NPPF HE4.2) or identifiable public benefits (NPPF HE6.4).

RECOMMENDATION:

That Listed Building Consent be REFUSED