

APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT OFFICER DELGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/05298
APPLICATION TYPE:	Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)
SITE ADDRESS:	Cuckoo Farmhouse, Cuckoo Corner, Urchfont, Devizes, SN10 4RA
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Repair works to a leaking chimney comprising of dismantling chimney and rebuilding
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The application site comprises a two-storey rendered house known as Cuckoo Farmhouse, which is a Grade II listed building, located within the settlement of Urchfont. The building is designated for its special architectural and/or historic interest under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The site lies within Urchfont Conservation Area but is outside the setting of other listed buildings.

The building exhibits a painted render elevation, under a thatched roof with timber casement windows and an off-centre main entrance door and retains features of special interest that contribute to its heritage significance.

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

URCHFONT CROOKWOOD LANE SU 0357 (north side) 10/205 Cuckoo Farmhouse II Farmhouse. C17. Brick and timber framing, rendered, with thatched roof. Two storeys, 3 bays. Left 2 bays approximately symmetrical, with central 4-panelled door within heavy frame. Flat canopy on shaped brackets. Two and 3-light C19 casement windows. Right bay beyond axial stack has indications of jetty. Deep casement windows and half hipped gable with exposed timber framing. Gable stack to left and lean-to extension to rear. Interior not seen, may be of interest.

PROPOSAL

The proposed scheme looks to carefully take down part of a chimney and rebuild to address the water ingress that is occurring due to the condition of the chimney. The works include introduction of amended details to ensure that the chimney stack has good weather protection.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
K/56391/LBC - Cuckoo Farmhouse Cuckoo Corner Urchfont Devizes Wiltshire SN10 4RA - Listed building consent Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 18/5/2007 – Reinstatement of habitable room in the roofspace

E/09/0083/FUL - The Farm House Cuckoo Farmyard Urchfont Wiltshire SN10 4SL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 10/3/2009 – Erection of two dormer windows to rear elevation.
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E/2012/0249/LBC - Cuckoo Farm Crookwood Lane Urchfont SN10 4RA - Listed building consent Decision - Approved Date: 17/4/2012 – Alterations to ground level of patio.
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K/31741/L - 'Cuckoo Farm', Urchfont, Devizes, Wilts. - Listed building consent Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 4/8/1995 – Infill extension, replacement of corrugated asbestos sheeting on two roofs & new window in gable end at high level.
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K/44370/L - Cuckoo Farmhouse, Urchfont - Listed building consent Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 18/12/2002 – Demolition and rebuilding of existing lean to and minor alterations internally. New bathroom window to rear elevation.

K/44371 - Cuckoo Farmhouse, Urchfont - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 18/12/2002 – Demolition and rebuilding of existing lean-to.
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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) 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.

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)

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.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Urchfont Parish Council support the application.
No other responses were received.

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.

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. In this case, the application was submitted with a Design & Access Statement which included a heritage assessment. The application is focused on both chimney stacks, and the assessment is focused on the significance of these elements, as required under the NPPF (HE5).

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 the age and vernacular form of the property, and its position as an edge of settlement farmstead.

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 proposed works are focused on the two chimney stacks.

Gable Stack

The works to this stack are limited to the installation of a vented stone capping to prevent water ingress into the chimney stack.

The proposed works are minor in nature. Whilst the stone capping will result in a slight increase in the overall height of the stack, this alteration would be visually discreet and would not adversely affect the character or appearance of the listed building or the surrounding conservation area. The works will also assist in preventing water ingress and securing the long-term protection of the building fabric.

Central Stack

The central chimney stack is located towards the right-hand side of the building, between bays 2 and 3. The stack appears to have been rebuilt previously, as evidenced by the use of modern brickwork, and therefore makes a limited contribution to the significance of the listed building. The stack is currently leaning, and the brickwork has deteriorated in places.

The proposed works comprise the careful taking down of the chimney stack to ridge level and its subsequent rebuilding, incorporating a new flue lining. The associated leadwork will also be renewed in accordance with the Lead Sheet Association's recommendations, providing an appropriate weathering detail and improving protection against water ingress.

Given that the chimney stack has previously been rebuilt and contains modern fabric, its careful dismantling and reconstruction is not considered to result in harm to the significance or special architectural or historic interest of the listed building. The reuse of salvaged bricks will help retain the established character and appearance of the stack, whilst the proposed works will address its current condition and provide for the long-term protection of the building.

Overall, the works are considered to represent appropriate and sensitive repairs that will preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and its contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

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

(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?	NA
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Comments: Informative to be applied to consider the potential impact to bats.

CONCLUSION

The NPPF confirms that when considering the potential impact 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). It makes clear that any harm to a designated heritage asset will be a matter of considerable importance and weight which requires clear and convincing justification.

In this case, the impact of the proposals on heritage assets will be largely positive as it will ensure that the leaning chimney stack is structurally sound, and the building is watertight. The requirements of current conservation legislation, policy or guidance are considered to be met and the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

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

- *Timeframe*
- *Plans/ drawings*
- *Information - 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 roof. 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 2017 (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 or listed building consent 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 work, the applicant is advised to follow the advice of a professional ecologist or to contact Natural England's Batline through the internet.*

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