

Date of Meeting	30/05/2017
Application Number	17/02426/FUL
Site Address	Poppy Cottage, 7 High Street, Downton, Wiltshire, SP5 3PG
Proposal	Two Storey Rear Extension (Resubmission of 16/05522/FUL)
Applicant	Mr and Mrs Mussell
Town/Parish Council	DOWNTON
Electoral Division	DOWNTON AND EBBLE VALLEY – Cllr Julian Johnson
Grid Ref	418069 121530
Type of application	Full Planning
Case Officer	Matthew Legge

Reason for the application being considered by Committee:

The head of development management has agreed this application be put before the Southern Area Planning Committee due to the local support present for the application and the unavailability of Cllr Julian Johnson to consider the application.

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to assess the merits of the proposal against the policies of the development plan and other material considerations and to consider the recommendation that the application be refused.

2. Report Summary

The application dwelling is a grade II listed building located within the Downton Conservation Area. The proposed development would involve the loss of a rear outshut and the enclosing of an external chimney stack as a result of the creation of a two storey rear extension (with first floor pitched thatched roof). The fact that the development does not affect the public view is not a principal consideration, given that anything which affects the character of a listed building, whether visible by the public or not, has to be assessed for its long-term impact on the designated heritage asset. The development is judged to result in 'less than substantial harm' to the listed building but such harm should only be accepted where the development results in a public benefit. It is not considered there is a public benefit for this proposal. The development is considered to be contrary to Core Policy 58 of the Adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy and Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. Site Description

No. 7 High Street (Poppy Cottage) is a grade II listed building which is located in the centre of the Downton village also being located in the Downton Conservation Area. The dwelling is a semi-detached brick cottage with a thatched roof. To the rear of the dwelling is a slate

mono-pitched roof which spans both semi-detached dwellings. Within the rear garden of the application site is a separately listed barn building which has an existing approval for conversion to holiday let accommodation.

4. Planning History

16/05522/FUL & 16/05781/LBC: 2 story rear extension to create larger kitchen/dinning and WC/utility on the ground floor and an additional bedroom at 1st floor. REF

14/05342/FUL & 05345/LBC: Conversion of existing garden barn to rear of property to holiday let accommodation. Approved with conditions

S/2004/0717: Sub division of property to two dwellings. Demolition and rebuilding single storey rear extension and internal alterations. Approved with conditions

S/2004/0718: Sub division of property to two dwellings. Demolish and rebuild, extend single storey, rear extension and internal alterations. Sub division of garden. Approved with conditions

5. The Proposal

This application proposes to demolish an existing single storey rear extension and to construct a two storey rear extension with a first floor pitched thatched roof. The proposed rear extension results in an increased ground floor area having a further rear projection of 1.2m out from the existing rear elevation.

6. Local Planning Policy

The Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) - adopted by Full Council on the 20th January 2015:

CP1 (Settlement Strategy)

CP2 (Delivery Strategy)

CP24 (Spatial Strategy for the Downton Community Area)

CP50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity)

CP57 (Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping)

CP58 (Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment)

Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026:

Car Parking Strategy

Government Guidance:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) March 2012

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

Supplementary Planning Guidance:

Adopted Supplementary Planning Document 'Creating Places Design Guide' April 2006

7. Summary of consultation responses

Parish Council – *Downton Parish Council has no objection to this application and considers it to be an improvement on the previous application to which it also raised no objection.*

WC Conservation – Object

WC Public Protection – No objection

English Heritage – Concerns raised

8. Publicity

1 letter of representation support:

- *“...I suggest that this application is both in keeping with the neighbourhood and in accordance with the Council's policies”*

1 letter of support from the Downton Society:

- *“The present replacement outshut (the original having been demolished and rebuilt in approximately 2004) is of very poor quality and therefore of very limited heritage value.*
- *The major work, namely the extension on the west (rear elevation), can only be seen from limited public areas.*
- *The works to the High Street elevation will not alter the streetscape....”*

1 letter of comment/concern from the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, (WANHS), and the Council of British Archaeology (CBA):

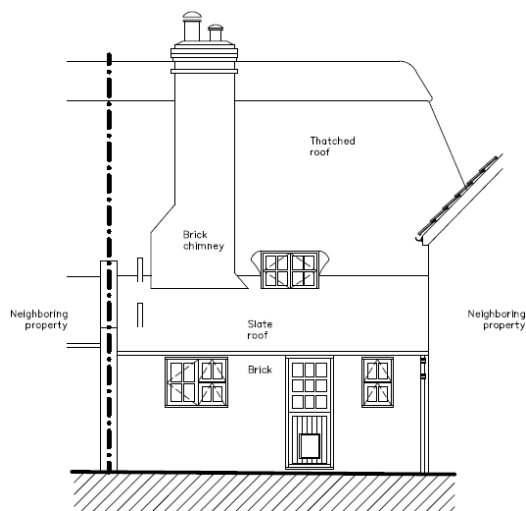
- *“It is therefore suggested that for this application to be approved, an alternative entry to the upper floor extension should be established that does not require any removal of the wall plate or smoke blackened rafters.”*

9. Planning Considerations

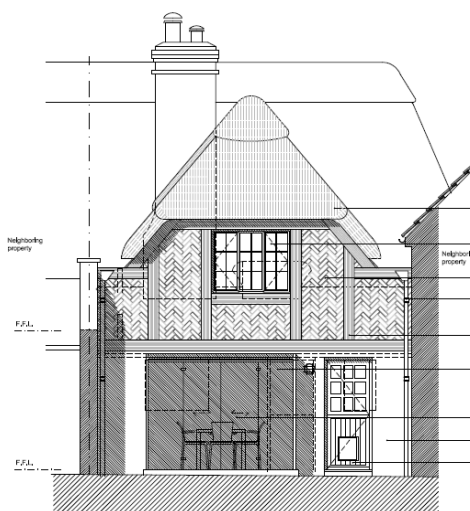
Impact on grade II Listed building and Conservation Area

This application seeks to demolish an existing single storey mono pitched rear extension and to construct a two storey rear extension with pitched roof thatched roof and increased foot print area.

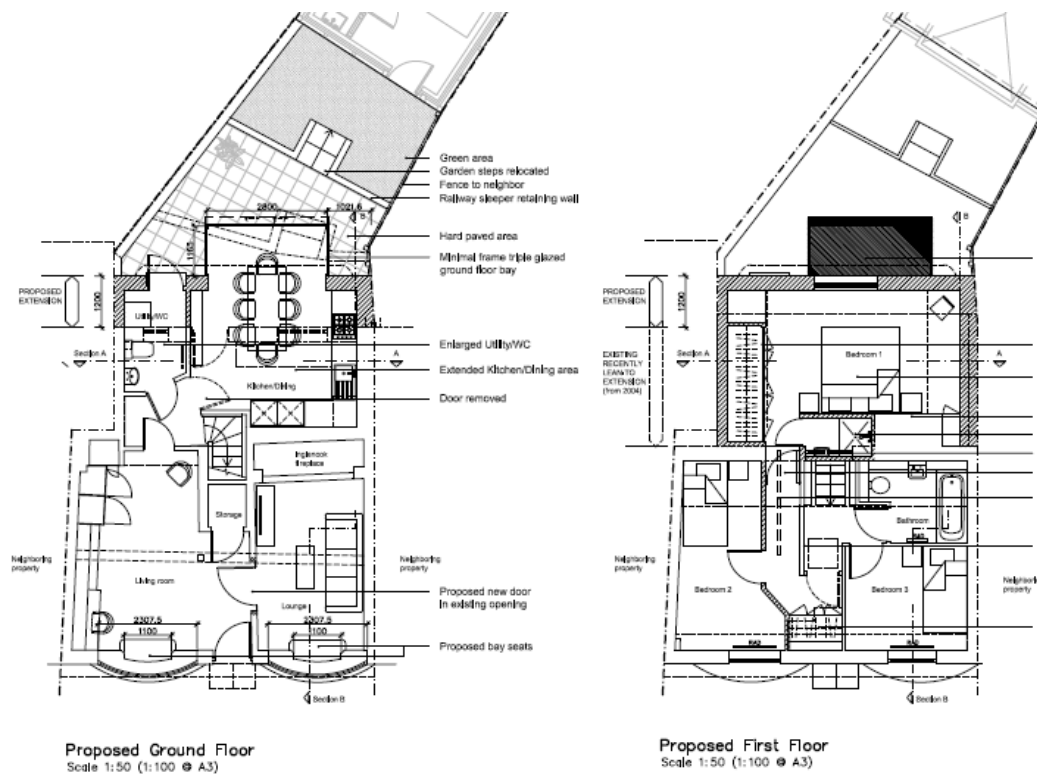
Existing rear elevation



Proposed rear elevation



Proposed ground and first floor plans



Wiltshire Council's Conservation Officer has objected to the scheme having provided the following comments:

"The scheme as now presented was originally submitted for pre-application discussions and my comments were as follows:

"I cannot support the proposal for a full width rear two storey extension. I note the statement that the 'intention is to preserve/respect the character and the scale of the existing thatched cottage' – I would contend that this proposal does neither.

The existing single storey out shut is very typical of cottages of this period. Indeed, I note that the listing description says 'outshuts added c1800'. Even if the outshut has been rebuilt (Ms Treasure's report says 'to extend and raise to two storeys the current 2004 single-storey lean-to of reclaimed bricks.....'), the form and layout is of significance in terms of the historic evolution of the house.

The loss of the outshut, and the associated covering up of the entire rear of the cottage, including enclosing the existing chimney stack, would have a significant adverse impact on the character of the building and the loss of the outshut, would significantly diminish its significance. For these reasons I could not support the proposals.

A second reason for not supporting the proposals is that the proposed development will lessen the space between the house and the rear outbuilding (listed). I think it will result in a cramped, over-developed plot.



Existing drawings for 2004 application showing outshut

I could not support a two-storey rear extension and would resist the loss of the existing outshut.”

In addition to the above comments, the proposal also involves the loss of an eyebrow dormer window which is an attractive feature of the rear elevation of the thatched cottage, in keeping with its character.

In my view the proposals would cause some harm to the significance of the listed building and should be resisted in accordance with CP57 and 58, paragraph 132 of the NPPF and also section 66 of the Planning (LB and CA) Act 1990.”

It is clear from the above comments that the Conservation Officer has considered the proposal and has assessed the development’s impact as harmful to the grade II listed building.

Historic England have raised concerns over the scheme having commented “*Our major concern is that the projecting chimney-breast at the rear will be engulfed by the proposed second storey, which is a prominent feature on this elevation, and a key indication of the cottage's plan form and single room depth as built, contributing to the building's legibility. External shafts of chimneystacks are considered to be rare survivals and may reflect a local vernacular tradition; obscuring it would be considered harmful. The outshut is a typical early extension to a small scale cottage of this type and although it has been rebuilt it is of the footprint and to the scale of its earlier form and contributes to the cottage's interest. A two storey extension spanning the width of the original cottage will dominate this elevation whilst the outshut is clearly subservient to it. The increase in footprint will in addition bring it into closer proximity to the separately listed barn affecting its setting which is a concern.*

Historic England has concerns regarding the application on heritage grounds. 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 132, whereby great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and 134 of the NPPF, whereby harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal of which there does not appear to be any....”

In considering the comments submitted, Officers also acknowledge that this application has received local support from the Parish Council who comment “*Downton Parish Council has no objection to this application and considers it to be an improvement on the previous application to which it also raised no objection*” and support from 1 residents of Downton who supports the application.

The Downton Society also supported the scheme commenting “*Poppy Cottage is located in a conservation area and is listed Grade II. Architecturally it has been altered considerably since its original construction sometime in the 18th century. While it sits well in the streetscape there are no really significant historic features on either elevation or within apart from the framed timber partition.*

The proposals involve the removal of an outshut and its replacement with a new structure as well as other minor alterations such as to the bay windows on the High Street elevation.....”

Anything which affects the character of a listed building, whether visible by the public or not, has to be assessed for its long-term impact on the designated heritage asset. Officers are also aware of the recent (15th August 2016) Appeal Decision (APP/Y3940/W/16/3148588) located at Titchbourne Farm, Redlynch, Salisbury in which the Inspector has supported this view:

5. The site of the proposed extension is not evident in public views. The small group of dwellings of which the appeal property forms part is served by a track leading from Moor Lane. From Moor Lane, the roof and gable of the former barn can be seen as well as The Granary, another converted building and the chimneys of Titchborne Farmhouse. As a group these buildings continue to provide evidence of the former farm complex. The significance of listed buildings is not determined by their visibility or public accessibility. Buildings are listed for their special architectural or historic interest. In addition to the barn being listed for its intrinsic interest, its significance is enhanced by it forming part of a group of buildings with a related purpose.

The Inspector also comments:

10. Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works special regard shall be paid to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Section 66 of the same Act imposes a similar duty in respect of applications for planning permission. The proposed extension would harm the architectural and historic interest of the listed building and so would fail to preserve it.
12. Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) addresses the historic environment and emphasises the importance of heritage assets. When assessed in the context of paragraphs 132 – 134 of the Framework, the appeal proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the listed building. In such cases the harm should be assessed against the public benefits of the proposal. I note the appellant’s contention that there would be a public benefit arising from the building meeting modern day living standards. I also saw during my site visit that the space outside the dwelling is constrained. However, I am not persuaded that the long term conservation of the building is at risk and I find that any public benefits are limited and would not outweigh the harm I have identified and to which I give considerable weight. The proposals therefore do not comply with the policies of the Framework.

It is considered that the proposed two storey rear extension will result in less than substantial harm’ to the designated heritage asset but harm (NPPF terms of Para 134) should only be accepted if there is a public benefit and there is none in this case (personal benefit does not equate with public). The Council is not aware of any known issues concerning the long term conservation of the building and consider that any public benefit resulting from the development is limited and does not outweigh the harm.

Notwithstanding the considered harm to the designated heritage asset the rear located development will not be readily visible within the Conservation Area and whilst there is harm to the heritage asset it is a balanced view that the rear development will not result in demonstrable harmful to the wider setting of the Conservation Area.

Neighbour amenity

The proposed creation of the two storey rear extension does not propose any side elevation openings which would look towards neighbouring properties. The development will result in the creation of first floor glazed windows which have an outlook towards the rear garden and the garden barn building. Given the close proximity of neighbouring dwellings and a noted exposed neighbouring balcony, Officers consider that there is an existing situation of overlooking between neighbouring dwellings and the insertion of the first floor opening is unlikely to introduce any undue harm to neighbouring amenity. Officers also note that this application has not resulted in an objection or comments from consulted neighbouring dwellings.

10. Conclusion

The proposed development would involve the unacceptable loss of the rear outshut and the enclosing the existing chimney stack which has significance to the character of the listed building. The creation of the two storey rear extension is judged to have an undue impact to the setting and significance of the designated Heritage Asset. The proposed development does not result in any public benefit where harm to the heritage asset is permissible.

RECOMMENDATION

Refusal

The application dwelling is a grade II listed building located within the Downton Conservation Area. The proposed development would involve the loss of a rear outshut and the enclosing the existing chimney stack as a result of the creation of a two storey rear extension. The fact that the development does not affect the public view is not a principal consideration, given that anything which affects the character of a listed building, whether visible by the public or not, has to be assessed for its long-term impact on the designated heritage asset. The development is judged to result in 'less than substantial harm' to the listed building but such harm should only be accepted where the development results in a public benefit. It is not considered there is a public benefit for this proposal. The development is considered to be contrary to Core Policy 58 of the Adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy and Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework.