

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	260126
Site Address:	Riseley Farm, Part Lane, Swallowfield, Wokingham, RG7 1TB
Expiry Date:	16 March 2026
Advert Publication Date:	20 January 2026
Site Notice Date:	Displayed 21 January 2026
Site Visit Date:	11 February 2026
Proposal: Application for the Listed Building Consent for the proposed repair and renovation of existing Grade II listed farmhouse, including fenestration alterations, internal alterations and external works and landscaping.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- Listed building (Grade II - List entry no. 1118070)
- Area of Special Character (Riseley Farm)
- Bat Roosting Area
- Countryside
- Amber Great Crested Newt Impact Zone
- Flood Zone 3

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP7 – Biodiversity
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	TB24 – Designated Heritage Assets TB23 – Biodiversity and Development TB26 – Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Areas of Special Character

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Planning history pertaining to the wider site but none of relevance to the main farmhouse/ this proposal.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

WBC Built Heritage	No objection subject to conditions
WBC Ecology	Required a bat survey
NatureSpace (Newts)	No objection

REPRESENTATIONS

Swallowfield Parish Council – Wished to make no comment

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

Riseley Farm is situated off Part Lane, a single track road, running north south, lined with trees and hedges, that connects the villages of Riseley and Swallowfield. The farm contains the Grade II listed farmhouse, a piggery and various outbuildings and stables.

Proposal:

Listed Building Consent is sought for a number of internal and external works to the main farmhouse on site. Namely these are:

- Removal of the existing kitchen and utility fittings. New kitchen and utility fittings.
- Internal redecoration like for like throughout kitchen and utility.
- New tiled finish on electric heating mat on existing concrete floor in kitchen and utility.
- New woodburning stoves and fireplace repairs/ alterations on the ground floor
- Redecoration and repair of external doors and windows. Replacing windows for timber framed ones, with new heritage glazing
- Redecoration and repair of existing cast iron rainwater goods.
- Cleaning (non-chemical) of black paint from existing internal timbers.
- New secondary glazing.
- Repair and redecoration like for like of internal doors.
- Cutting back of hard surfaces against the existing building externally and installation of a French drain.
- New sandstone patio.
- New first floor sanitaryware to bathrooms. Removal of the existing carpet. New tile finish on Ditra mat to allow for movement in existing floor. Electric underfloor heating mat.
- Adjustment of the layout of the first floor master bedroom bathroom dressing rm including the removal of a modern wall.
- Paint removal and repair of brickwork plinth to building. Lime pointing repairs.
- Extension and renewal of the existing patio area in sandstone.

Repointing of 2 x chimneys and installation of a roof vent was removed from the proposal during the course of the application.

ASSESSMENT

Impact on heritage asset

The Heritage assets are as follows:

- *Riseley Farm(house) – grade II listed building (list entry no. 1118070), since 1986.*
- *Barn approx. 6m west of farmhouse – of curtilage listed building status*
- *Barn approx. 40m west of farmhouse – of curtilage listed building status.*

- *Outbuilding approx. 16m NE of farmhouse – of curtilage listed building status.*
- *Riseley Farm, Swallowfield – Special Character Area (of non-designed heritage status)*

The official Listing of the farmhouse, as per Historic England, is as follows:

SWALLOWFIELD PART LANE SU 76 SW (east side) 11/31 Riseley Farmhouse G.V. II Hall house and byre, now farmhouse. Early C16 extended early C17 and C18, altered C20. Part timber framed with painted brick infill, part painted brick; old tile gabled roofs. L-plan. 3 framed bay hall, 2 framed bay crosswing with C19 gabled extension at rear in angle; 2 framed bay byre on left. 2 storeys and one storey. Chimney on ridge of crosswing, one on rear roof, one tall chimney on left gable of byre. Entrance front:- 2 bays 2,3 and 4 light casements on left, one bay gable on right with 2-light at first floor, 4-light on ground floor. C20 half glazed entrance door to left of gable with flat hood. Interior:- some frame visible; large beams on the first floor and those on the ground floor with chamfers and stopped ends. Inglenook fireplace with C20 front.

Policy TB24 of the MDD states that proposals will *conserve and seek the enhancement of designated heritage assets in the Borough and their settings by:*

a. Requiring works to or affecting heritage assets or their setting to demonstrate that the proposals would at least conserve and, where possible enhance the important character and special architectural or historic interest of the building, Conservation Area, monument or park and garden including its setting and views.

The below commentary incorporates the WBC Built Heritage Officer's comments, who raises no objection to the proposal subject to conditions.

Works to Ground-floor:

On the ground floor, it is proposed to remove the existing brick piers where an Aga cooker had been. These brick piers are formed in a modern brick, and there appears to be no chimney stack arising from this point above. As such, there is no objection to the removal of the brick piers as they are not considered to hold any historic significance. The replacement of kitchen cupboards and tile flooring with mat underfloor heating is also not considered to harm the historic fabric.

New wood burners are to be installed into two of the existing fireplaces, on the basis that their installation requires no alteration of the fireplaces/hearths there is no objection raised to this. Originally, the proposal also made reference to there being new flue liners. However, all works to chimney/ the roof has now been omitted from

the proposal in lights of ecological surveys that would be required (see 'Ecology' section of the report). As such, the condition recommended by the Built Heritage Officer securing details for new flue liners is not considered relevant to the amended proposal.

Within the dining room, it is proposed to clean and repair the existing floor tiles and for the repair of the brickwork to the fireplace hearth. Whilst this repair work is accepted, there is an absence of detail in how the works would be carried out. To ensure they would be done in an appropriate manner, a suitably worded condition will be attached.

Works to first floor:

Rear Bathroom

The proposal entails the replacement of the existing shower and sanitaryware and it is intended to install a new false ceiling (with ceiling spotlights in) 300mm below the line of the room's existing lath and plaster ceiling.

In principle as this would retain the historic ceiling and so in principle there is no objection, albeit further details are believed necessary as to the means by which the new false ceiling would be formed/supported. No extraction is now proposed in this bathroom, as originally indicated, due to the implications this could have on the roofscape and requirement for ecological surveys.

Main Bedroom & Adjoining Dressing/bathroom

Within the main bedroom, there is the intention for built-in wardrobe across the northern end wall of the room. Further details that would confirm how the built-in wardrobe is to be formed without affect the historic timbers is required and would be secured via condition.

A new frame ledged and braced timber door is to be installed within the existing low open doorway (below the end wall historic wall plate timber) in the northern end wall of the bedroom that provide access to the adjoining dressing room and bathroom. As such, with no alteration to enlarge the existing door opening and cutting or alteration of the historic frame timbers, the insertion of a door to the existing opening would be acceptable from a heritage stance.

Likewise, the proposed re-ordering of the ensuite bathroom/dressing room to form a single larger ensuite bathroom space is considered to be acceptable from a heritage stance, as the internal walling to be removed is modern partition walling.

External works

Fenestration alterations

All the existing windows of the property are modern replacements that are timber framed, and single glazed. These windows are not

considered to hold historic significance, and their form incorporates some modern non-traditional elements. For those reasons, the replacement of the windows for timber framed ones utilising appropriate heritage double glazing is acceptable, especially were the form of the new windows to better resemble a traditional window form. Whilst no details have been presently submitted of the replacement windows, this can be conditioned.

In terms of internal doors, these are proposed to be repaired and redecorated like for like which is acceptable and will be conditioned (all like for like works will be encompassed under a single condition).

Rainwater goods

All cast iron rainwater goods are to be redecorated and repaired like for like. Again, this like for like work will be conditioned.

Patio and French drain

A new patio and widened path made of sandstone pavers is proposed which is acceptable given the presence of existing patio areas. Furthermore, a newly formed 200mm wide French drain around the perimeter of the building is proposed. The addition of a French drain is considered to be a beneficial measure that will aid with ground drainage and potential causes of existing damp to the building.

Impact on Area of Special Character:

The application site is located within the Riseley Farm Area of Special Character. Given the proposal is primarily for internal work, and external works being largely repair/ maintenance/ like-for-like works, the proposal would not have an undue impact on the Area of Special Character as the built form would still retain the same appearance.

Conclusion:

In summary the works are considered generally positive to preserve and upkeep of the Listed Building, albeit some aspects of the work do require further details to ensure the historic fabric of the building is not unduly compromised. The WBC Built Heritage Officer has not indicated that the proposals would result in any or a defined level of harm to the Listed Building (ie. less than substantial/ substantial). As such, Officers therefore conclude that the provisions of paragraphs 214 and 215 of the NPPF do not apply. The proposal does not appear to result in conflict with elements specified in the listing itself, which are considered to constitute the significance of the Listed Building.

Overall, the proposal is deemed to comply with policy TB24 of the MDD which requires proposals to conserve and seek enhancement of heritage assets. This scheme at least passes the threshold of conserving the asset.

Ecology	Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy and policy TB23 of the MDD seek to protect biodiversity. Specifically, bats and their roosts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the Regulations) transpose the Habitats Directive¹ into national law. Schedule 2 of the Regulations lists all species of bats as being European Protected Species of animals. It is an offence, subject to exceptions, to, amongst other things, kill or disturb animals listed in Schedule 2; this includes a single bat, not just a population of a species. However, these actions can be made lawful through the granting of licenses by the appropriate authority (Natural England), but only after it is satisfied that there are no satisfactory alternatives and such actions will have no detrimental effect on the species concerned. Whilst appreciating that there is no express mention of protected species within Section 16 and 74(3) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, it is considered that the granting of listed building consent should not circumnavigate the requirement of the Regulations. As such, protected species are a consideration in the determination of this Listed Building Consent application. The site is located in a bat roost area and amber zone for Great Crested Newts; both species are protected. As previously mentioned, the repointing of 2 x chimneys and installation of a roof vent were removed from the proposal. This was following WBC Ecology's consultation response that this work would require a Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment to be carried. The site is located in an area suitable for bat roosting and the Ecologist was of the view that works to the chimney could consequently affect the roof and therefore bats. The applicant did not wish to provide a preliminary bat roost assessment and so withdrew this element of works from the application. Because of this, the request for a preliminary bat roost assessment is no longer required. A condition securing an Arboricultural Impact Assessment was also recommended by an Ecologist, however trees are not a material consideration in Listed Building Consent applications, and so the condition not necessary or reasonable. In terms of impact on Great Crested Newts, NatureSpace have confirmed that the applicant has provided an ecological technical note: 'Ecology Technical Note'. In relation to great crested newts (GCN) the report states that <i>"the habitats on-site provide very limited suitable habitat due to the lack of varied species diversity and sward length"</i>. A habitat suitability index (HSI) was completed on the pond closest to the development, returning a below average value of 0.56 (where 0.8 is excellent). Although, a HSI is not conclusive of GCN
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	presence, it indicates the reasonably low likelihood of the species using this pond. The ponds themselves are relatively isolated with little in terms of suitable habitat to aid in great crested newt movement, with the wider surroundings comprising extensively of an arable landscape. The ecological report includes standard precautionary working measures which should be adopted when clearance and construction on the site commence. An informative is included to remind the applicant it is an offence to (amongst other things): deliberately capture, disturb, injure or kill great crested newts if these are found on site. Overall, the proposal would not adversely affect protected species and therefore complies with policy CP7 of the Core Strategy and TB23 of the MDD.
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The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010):

In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that persons with protected characteristics as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

RECOMMENDATION

Conditions agreed:	Yes
Recommendation:	GRANT Listed Building Consent subject to the following conditions: 1. Time Limit 2. Approved Plans 3. Matching finishes 4. Methodology for works 5. Window and door joinery details
Date:	2 March 2026
Earliest date for decision:	23 February 2026

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	02/03/26