Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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Officer's Title: Senior Planning Officer

Application No: **PL/2023/07241 (LBC) & PL/2023/07180 (FUL)**
Change of Use from Shop to Shop and three Dwellings and Associated Alterations.
7 Silver Street, Trowbridge

Please find following comments in respect of the above application(s).

Recommendations:

	No Comment
	Support
	Support subject to conditions (please set out below)
	Object (for reasons set out below)
X	No objections subject to conditions

Scope of comments: the following comments relate to the built historic environment.

Policy: 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. Sections 16 (LBC) and 66 (PP) require 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.

The NPPF outlines government policy, including its policy 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 201-3 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.

The Council's Core Strategy Policy CP58 '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."

Historic England Advice Note 2 – Making changes to Heritage Assets illustrates the application of policies set out in the NPPF in determining applications for PP and LBC.

Site: the site is an end terraced shop unit at the edge of the town centre. The building dates from the late C18/early C19 and is constructed in rubble stone and brick with an ashlar frontage (currently painted) and a mid-nineteenth century shop front. The original building has been extended to the rear.

Proposal: the current applications reflect minor amendments to a previously approved scheme (2022) to include the replacement of the first floor front sash windows, the removal of a C20 lean-to addition and minor amendments to the layout and opening on the NW elevation.

The shop previously occupied the whole of the building and the proposals are to retain the ground floor front range in retail use (with access from the rear also) and convert the remainder of the ground and first floor to create three residential units.

Issues: impact on the listed building, impact on the conservation area.

Assessment: Paragraph 194 requires that applicants describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. This should include sufficient information to provide a clear understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and its setting and the potential impact of any proposals on that significance. In this case, the applications are accompanied by a "Design and Heritage Statement" which provides sufficient information to understand the impact of the proposals and is proportionate to their scope. The requirements of the NPPF are therefore met in this respect.

The NPPF defines significance 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 assesses significance in a similar manner, referring to evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal values of a place. In this case the significance of the building lies largely with its historic fabric and architecture (and particularly those of the front elevation and shop front) - its form, layout and architectural expression/detailing and the remaining evidence they provide for the development and retail use of the building. The high-quality historic shop frontage also makes a particular contribution to the character of the conservation area.

The additional works to amend the layout and opening relate to areas of lesser significance within the building and areas of fabric which have been previously altered. In particular the removal of the lean-to extension will enhance the NW elevation, allowing the curved wall of the original building to be better appreciated. The first-floor front sash windows are in obviously poor repair and a like-for like replacement is acceptable.

Summary & conclusion: The impact of the proposals will largely be neutral or slightly positive in replacing elements of the original cellular plan form and providing an economically viable use which will secure the future maintenance of the building. The requirements of current conservation legislation, policy or guidance (set out within Section 16, 66 and 72 of the Act, Section 16 of the NPPF and CP58) are therefore considered to be met and there is no objection to the approval of the applications.

Condition: Joinery details are required for the additional new external doors and windows, including the new sash windows. Ideally these would be provided at this stage but could be conditioned if required.

In addition, the previous condition 4 (requiring the preservation of historic features. Including fireplaces) should be repeated, as should compliance with the approved details submitted in respect of condition 3.