Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

7 November 2023

Fiona Webb
Senior Conservation Officer (Consultant)
Wiltshire Council Conservation (Central)

Officer's Name: Lucy Rutter-Dowd
Officer's Title: Planning Officer

Application No: **PL/2023/09312**
Erection of new 3 bedroom dwelling on infill land to the south east of The Beeches, 2 Kings Road, with existing access.
The Beeches, 2 Kings Road, Easterton, Devizes, SN10 4PS

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

Recommendations:

X	Comment (for reasons set out below)
	Support in principle subject to amendments to the scheme (as set out below)
	Support subject to conditions (as set out below)
	Object (for reasons set out below)
	No objections

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 or enhancing 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. Paragraph 197 requires local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

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."

Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy Policy CP57 '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.

Site and assets considered: The site forms part of the garden of The Beeches and faces the junction of Kings Road and Strawberry Fields (a new housing scheme).

Proposal: The development seeks permission for the erection of one three bedroom dwelling.

Relevant planning history: N/A

Issues: Impact on the setting of neighbouring listed building, impact on the conservation area.

Information considered/provided: Paragraph 194 of the NPPF 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 application is not supported by a "Heritage Statement" and fails to provide any objective assessment of the impact of the proposal and as a result it fails to meet the requirements of the NPPF.

Assessment of the proposal: Paragraph 195 of the NPPF also provides for the local planning authority to make its own assessment of impact and the following heritage recommendations are offered on this basis.

The proposal seeks the erection of one dwelling on land facing the boundary of Easterton Conservation and the Church of St Barnabas, a Grade II listed building. The site affects the setting of both of these designated heritage assets.

The site form part of an established residential plot which is a large garden. There is no heritage objection to the principle of a new dwelling subject to a sensitive well designed scheme.

Strawberry Fields is a new housing development and the proposed detached house would be similar in scale and design to other new properties being built. However the proposal seeks three large rooflights to the front elevation, which would detract from the setting of the designated heritage assets. There would be no objection to the proposal if these were re-sited to the rear.

Summary & conclusion: The NPPF confirms that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great 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 requires clear and convincing justification.

Further amendments are therefore required.