Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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Officer's Title: Senior Planning Officer

Application No: **PL/2023/11226 and PL/2023/10936**
Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of bespoke garden room
Beauchamp House, Barkers Hill, Donhead St Andrew, Shaftesbury, SP7 9EB

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

Recommendations:

	No comment
	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)
x	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.

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 207-9 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 203 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.

National Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on interpreting the NPPF.

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 house is a grade II listed Victorian former rectory building, listed in 1987:

'Wrongly shown on O.S. map as Hill House. Rectory, now private house. 1892 by C.E. Ponting, paid for by H. Chapman of Donhead House (q.v.). Flemish bond brick with limestone dressings, tiled hipped roof, brick stacks with stone cappings. Two-storey, 5-window entrance front. Gabled porch with round-arched opening and coped verge with kneelers, 4-light mullioned and transomed window to right, single and 2-light mullioned casements to left. First floor with string course, two 2-light, 3-light mullioned casements and single chamfered light with gabled projection to left with 5-light mullioned casements. Segmental-headed dormer to attic. Right return has 2-storey polygonal bay with mullioned and transomed casements to left, 3- light mullioned and transomed casement to right with 2-light to first floor, segmental-headed attic dormer. Rear has half-glazed door with large stone shell hood, large square bay to left and various mullioned casements with large 6-light mullioned and transomed casement lighting stairs, three gabled dormers with 3- light mullioned casements. Cast-iron rainwater goods. Interior retains original joinery; 4-panelled doors in moulded architraves, eared architraves to ground floor, good stairs with splat balusters and square newels. Occupies a prominent position overlooking the Nadder Valley. Ceased to be the rectory during 1950s. (Diocesan Records)'

The house is not in a conservation area.

Proposal:

The proposed replacement structure, in footprint terms, is exactly the same as the existing and indeed, will utilise the existing brick plinth walls.

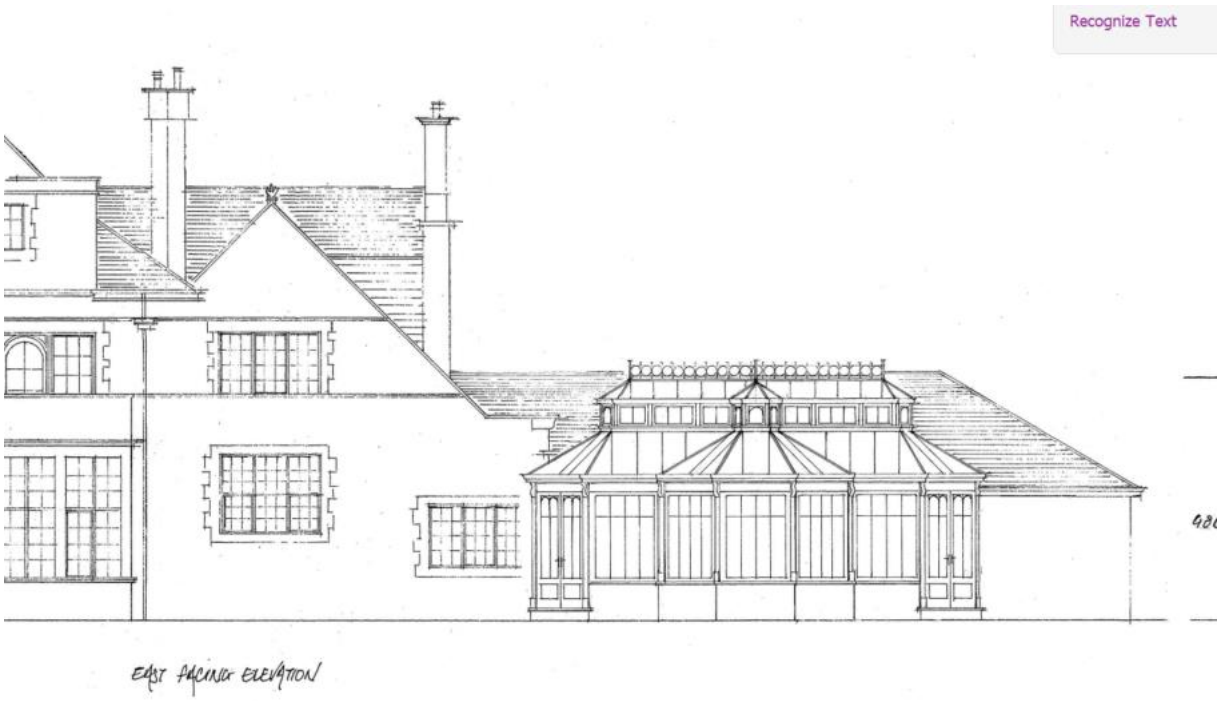
No new internal openings are required ie as existing.

Existing elevations



Conservatory added in the 1990s

Proposed elevations ie more flamboyant:



Issues: impact on the listed building

Information considered/provided: Paragraph 200 requires that applicants describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

The application is accompanied by a D&A& heritage statement which notes that the existing conservatory dates to the 1990s. It does not say it is not of significance but it clearly is not of significance.

Significance of assets and contribution of setting (as appropriate): 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 - its form, layout and architectural expression/detailing and use of high-quality design materials which have significant aesthetic and architectural interest;

That it is by a quality Victorian church architect;

That it was a former rectory;

That it occupies a prominent open position and as such its setting contributes to its interest.

Assessment:

The existing conservatory is modern and unattractive and as such, detracts from the appearance of the listed building. That said, it is positioned away from an important elevation, mitigating the harm.

The proposed replacement conservatory would utilise the same footings and does not require new openings into the house. It is 'grander' in appearance, but such a 'flamboyant' approach to a garden building is entirely in keeping with late Victorian greenhouses/conservatories. Furthermore, it could be removed at a future point without harm to the listed building.

As such, I raise no objections subject to a condition requiring the original 'external' wall to remain unplastered..

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.

In this case, I consider no harm would arise to the heritage asset and as such, the works are in accordance with S16 of the PLBCA Act 1990 as well as core policy 58.

Suggested condition
Stone wall (external wall of house) remains unplastered