Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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

Officer's Name: Joe Leesam
Officer's Title: Planning Officer

Application No: **PL/2023/10981**
Proposed traditional wooden woven fence panels and wooden picket fence along boundaries
22 High Street, Wedhampton, Devizes, Wilts, SN10 3QE

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

Recommendations:

X	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)
	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 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 site is a Grade II listed building located within Wedhampton Conservation Area. The property is semi detached and the neighbouring property is also listed Grade II.

Proposal: The proposal seeks to erect traditional wooden woven fence panels and wooden picket fence along boundaries

Relevant planning history: N/A

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

Information considered/provided: Paragraph 200 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 accompanied by a "Design and Access 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.

However, paragraph 201 also provides for the local planning authority to make its own assessment of impact and the following heritage recommendations are offered on this basis.

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 listed building lies largely with its historic fabric and architecture which have significant aesthetic and architectural interest and which contribute to the character of the conservation area.

Assessment: This application concerns fencing boundary treatments to both sides of 22 High Street.

The existing boundary to the rear of 22/23 High Street is a small picket fence with a temporary willow screening tied to it for privacy. There is no attachment to either of the listed buildings.

The proposal seeks a 6ft woven fence panel as a rear boundary separating the listed buildings. This would run the entire length of the property boundary.

The existing boundary treatment to the highway has already been removed and replaced by the proposed 4ft picket fence. Hence this element of the proposal is a retrospective.

Regarding the 6ft woven fence, in principle I have no conservation objection to such a boundary treatment. However on site I did express that I would be looking for a living willow boundary, or similar. At the current time the proposed fence would be visually harsh, mainly due to the height and the lack of softness to the wooden fence panels. A weaved 6ft living willow fence may be an option, perhaps with a post and wire fence integrated. Alternatively the height of the proposed woven fence could be reduced and a 1ft trellis placed on top. I am however open to considering other options, preferable natural and more softer and more sympathetic to the rural village setting.

Regarding the retrospective picket fence, there is no conservation objection.

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.

As such further design amendments are requested to the proposed 1.8m boundary fence.