Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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Wiltshire Council Conservation (Central)

Officer's Name: Steven Sims
Officer's Title: Planning Officer

Application No: **PL/2024/00571 and PL/2024/190**
Conversion of the former public house to form 9 apartments over ground and second floors, demolition of the link building, continued Class E Use within the basement area and the development of a detached 2 storey building to accommodate 2 townhouses within the existing car park area, with associated car parking, refuse and cycle parking storage.
THE JOHN BARLEYCORN, WEYMOUTH STREET, WARMINSTER, BA12 9NP

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

Recommendations:

X	Comments
	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 property is a Grade II listed building located within Warminster Conservation Area

Proposal: The proposal seeks the conversion of the former public house to form 9 apartments over ground and second floors, demolition of the link building, continued Class E Use within the basement area and the development of a detached 2 storey building to accommodate 2 townhouses within the existing car park area, with associated car parking, refuse and cycle parking storage.

Relevant planning history: ENQ/2021/03349

Issues: impact on the significance of the listed building, impact on the setting of neighbouring listed buildings, impact on the character and appearance of 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 applications are accompanied by a "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.

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: 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 materials which have significant aesthetic and architectural interest and which contribute to the character of the conservation area.

Assessment: This is my second consultation response and follows on from the submission of amended plans.

The application seeks the conversion of the former public house to create commercial floorspace within the basement area, 9 apartments over ground, first and second floors, demolition of the link building and the development of a detached 2 storey building to accommodate 2 townhouses within the existing car park area, with associated car parking, refuse and cycle parking storage.

The John Barleycorn PH (former), No. 3 Weymouth Street is a Grade II Listed Building situated within the Warminster Central Conservation Area both of which are designated heritage assets.

The principle of conversion is acceptable subject to a sympathetic scheme that retains, and works with the existing historic fabric.

At the current time the proposed scheme has a number of aspects which in conservation terms are considered unacceptable:

i) The subdivision the large first floor room is unacceptable since this was most likely 'designed' as a function room, relating to the early purpose built public house

The scheme would also involve the loss of one of the two stair cases, however I am willing to make this compromise in order to achieve a viable and usable layout.

Clarification has not been provided regarding the retention of existing internal historic doors, fireplaces, skirting's and architraves in the scheme. If alterations are needed due to fire and sound proofing, please can this be stated on the drawings.

I am also seeking information in respect of existing lath and plaster ceilings and historic plastered walls and how these details would impact on the scheme. The original floorboards should be retained or replaced like-for-like if damaged and not replaced with chipboard flooring.

Details are also needed of all vents, heating and flues, soil and vent pipes. These need to be shown on the plans and elevations. as these can be cumulatively very damaging to the character and appearance of a building.

Regarding the windows, a condition assessment is required as it needs to be clearly shown on the drawings which windows are to be replaced. Hence terms such as 'window to be retained where possible' are not acceptable as the level of intervention and impact on the significance needs to be fully assessed.

Regarding the proposed basement works, no justification has been given for the works for subdivision and need for a secondary means of escape now that this area is proposed as storage.

In regards for the need to pin back the pair of timber doors to the carriage arch on a day by day basis, I can not understand why this is necessary, when there is a pedestrian door in the right hand side door.

In regard to the new build element at the rear, the design of this could be enhanced to better reflect a traditional outbuilding associated with an inn. Often such outbuildings had sack hoist window at first floor level, and such a feature could be an eye catcher when viewed from the streetscene.

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 information and amendments are requested.