

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

16 December 2025

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Officer's Title:

Application No: PL/2025/09109 and PL/2025/09313
Refurbish existing outbuilding to form ancillary accommodation
Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plans) of PL/2025/04483 - Refurbish
existing outbuilding to form ancillary accommodation
40 High Street, Downton, Salisbury, SP5 3PJ

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

Recommendations:

	Comment
	Support in principle subject to amendments to the scheme (as set out below)
	Support subject to conditions (as set out below)
X	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 test is set out within the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 16 requires 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.

C56The 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 214-216 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 210 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." It is also required that distinctive elements of Wiltshire's historic environment, including non-designated heritage assets, which contribute to a sense of local character and identity will be conserved, and where possible enhanced.

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: Grade II listed building located within Downton Conservation Area. The outbuilding subject of the application is a curtilage listed building.

Proposal: The proposal seeks the refurbishment of an existing outbuilding to form ancillary accommodation

Relevant planning history: PL/2025/04490 and PL/2025/04483 - Refurbish existing outbuilding to form ancillary accommodation (approved).

Issues: impact on the significance of the listed building, impact on setting of neighbouring listed buildings, impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Information considered/provided: Paragraph 207 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 "Planning 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 208 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 materials which have significant aesthetic and architectural interest, and which make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

Assessment: This proposal seeks consent for the refurbishment of an outbuilding to form ancillary accommodation. The application is an amendment of an earlier permission granted in 2025 for similar works.

The property No.40 High Street is a mid-terraced cottage within a row of five cottages which are Grade II Listed.

The outbuilding forms part of the curtilage and is semi-detached with an existing outbuilding owned by No.38 High Street.

The outbuilding to 40 High Street is constructed with single skin red brick walls and includes a steel up and over garage door. Due to its size the garage is not usable as a car parking space as identified by current Highways standards. The outbuilding has a small flat roof extension to the rear, simple timber rafted roof with corrugated metal sheet roof covering. The east gable is timber framed with sheet cladding and the east brick gable wall has a new brick skin lining internally to strengthen the existing gable wall up to wall plate height. The floor is concrete.

The outbuilding is attached to the neighbours outbuilding by a covered drive through. The roof to the drive through and neighbours outbuilding is finished with a temporary rubber sheet underlay. The outbuilding is currently used for general domestic storage.

The proposal is to refurbish the outbuilding, re-roof the rear extension to form a pitch and upgrade to provide ancillary accommodation.

It is proposed to upgrade the existing roof and cover with artificial slate. Internal alterations are to line the walls, build up floor levels, refurbish and line the roof will, generally upgrading the outbuilding for residential use. This would provide valuable additional living space that is connected to the large back garden. It is proposed to use upvc flush casement window and patio door, timber boarded front door and vertical composite through colour cladding.

In conservation terms, the proposed works are considered less refined in their design and would represent a retrograde step. The materials are artificial and manmade and are not considered sympathetic to the heritage assets. As such I consider that the materials in particular would have a harmful impact on the significance of the designated heritage assets.

I point out that Paragraph 140 of the NPPF discusses the importance of achieving well designed places and states 140. 'Local planning authorities should also seek to ensure that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion, as a result of changes being made to the permitted scheme (for example through changes to approved details such as the materials used)'.

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 the watering down of the design quality of the original permission is not supported; neither is the use of manmade materials which are not sympathetic to the designated heritage assets.