

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

URBAN DESIGN

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Date: 17.12.2025

Application No: PL/2025/09200

Proposal: Full: Redevelopment and renovation of the existing site to provide, within the retained buildings: 1 detached dwelling, 5 flats, A terrace comprising 4 dwellings, alongside the erection of 1 self-build detached dwelling. A new one-way access road, Parking areas and footpaths, External landscaping and associated works, Installation of photovoltaics and air source heat pumps and site drainage features.

Outline: Construction of 6 detached self-build dwellings

Site Address: 49, 51 & 53 (Rowden Hill House), Rowden Hill, Chippenham.

Case Officer: Peter Crozier

Reference:

Application files indexed 21 Nov 2025 and 27 Nov 2025 on the Wiltshire Council planning application webpage, including 'Rowden Hill Design and Access Statement Sept 2025'.

Policy and guidance:

Wiltshire Core Strategy, Core Policy 57 'Ensuring high quality design and place shaping'; Wiltshire Design Guide, Wiltshire Council Supplementary Planning Document adopted 25th March 2024; Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2038 (including Annexes) (Made May 2024).

Comment

The proposed design applied to the scale of development proposed within the existing grounds of Rowden Hill house and the particular characteristic nature of this, would accord with Core Strategy Core Policy 57 apart from the specific matters identified in bold text below.

The siting, layout, scale and appearance of the seven proposed self-build plots / detached dwellings within the grounds of the existing property as conveyed by the application drawings and images would retain a significant informal landscape foreground setting for the listed buildings and not detract from the predominance of these within the application site, viewed from within the retained grounds and from the main road.

Fundamental to this is the:

- Layout of the dwelling plots – shown set alongside the site perimeter well back into the grounds from the listed building and main road, placing and sweep of the access drive serving these and reflected in the regular curved front boundary line of plots;
- The limitation shown on the proposed scale i.e. size of individual building footprint / domestic two storey height and the degree of separation between of these volumes which should not detract from the listed building, 49e set discretely back alongside the existing ancillary block and the other houses shown well down the existing slope of the grounds.

- The appearance of the houses: the limited palette of proposed roof and façade facings, enclosed boundary treatment and hard landscaping conveyed in the Self Build Design Code pages of the Design and Access Statement:

In the above context the proposed variety of plot size and placing of dwellings shown, the scope conveyed for variety of individual built form and a varied disposition of palette facings would be appropriate, rather than an alternative design narrative that draws closely on the traditional formal building character of the historic house.

The plots and houses by being arranged around and accessed through the grounds should be appreciated as an integral entity with the existing listed house and curtilage. To avoid a disparate appearance between these houses, the unifying overall modern design language conveyed across all the houses proposed should extend to their common architectural detailing of: building elements, boundary treatments and hardstanding conveyed in the Self Build Design Code.

This integration should include a considerable expanse of ‘local’ stone as façades which is not apparent would materialise from the Code at least for the six proposed houses forming the Outline planning element of the application, which would form a backdrop within the grounds and be appreciated with the listed house, for example as stone conveyed for the ground floor on the Self build house example perspective view for these on the first page of the Code. This would be necessary to present an appreciable visual connection /unifying feature with the universal stone façades of the listed buildings. Such considerable facing in stone is also the requirement of the Neighbourhood Plan in recognition that stone facings (in ashlar and coursed rubble stone) to buildings and external walling are an intrinsic key characteristic and identity of the town and wider locality: Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan Annex 1 ‘Chippenham Design Guide’ :

- paragraph K4 : *‘External finishes shall generally be of local stone facings and clay pantile roofs as these are the defining intrinsic characteristic of external walls and roofs respectively in Chippenham and its environs’ ‘Natural and high quality reconstituted stone reflecting the characteristic local stone texture, coursing and colour should be comprehensively used with conviction as a defining feature throughout new development’*
- paragraph K6: *Brick and render external facing materials are not an intrinsic characteristic of Chippenham and should be used sparingly in any major development located within the existing built up area of the town’.*

In the above context and setting with the listed buildings and grounds, the ‘shallow rise rubble stone’ image shown on the Materials page of the Code shown made up of relatively slender but irregular size /shape and irregular coursing units would be suitable whereas a buff faced brick for its superficial colour resemblance to stone or brick sized/shaped and brick coursed units would not be appropriate. **On the Materials palette a natural slate roof as image shown rather than a ‘red’ clay tile** as an option annotated, would make the visual connection to the existing slate roof of the listed building.

The proposed site layout shows that rear gardens of all seven proposed houses are at least equal to the footprint of their dwelling and of regular shape to accord with Wiltshire Design Guide expectation 9.2.2.