

APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION CASE OFFICER REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/09292
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	National Trust Car Park, Hither Way, Lacock, SN15 2RQ
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Replacement of car parking machines
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions

PROPOSAL

The application seeks permission to replace the existing car parking pay machines with new solar powered terminals, offering visitors the option to pay via a Parking App or card if not a National Trust member.

There are three machines in the main car park which will be removed and replaced with the new type - two would be near the north end of the main car park, near the entrance from Hither Way, and one between the main car park and the overflow car park.

Below: Sited between main car park and overflow car park, and to be replaced:



Below: Pay machine near entrance to car park. This will be replaced and a second machine sited within this area:



There are two machines in the overflow car park. These are proposed to be removed and not replaced.

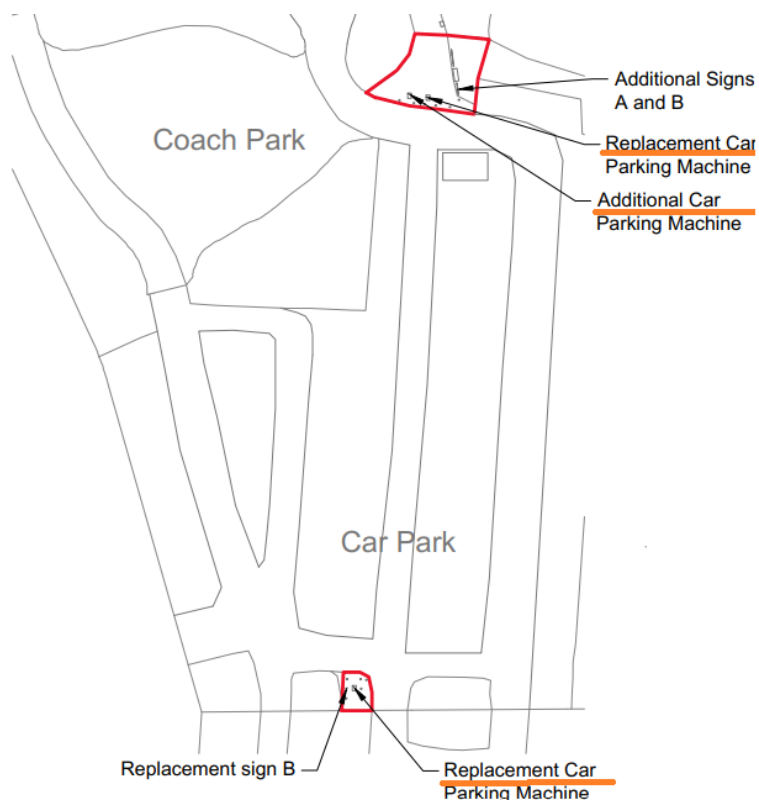
Below: Pay machine at the very bottom end of the overflow car park. Footpath is beyond the tree belt



Below: machine in middle of overflow car park



An extract of the submitted proposed site plan (which does not show the overflow car park or its machines) is shown below with additional notation from the case officer highlighting proposed three machines in orange:



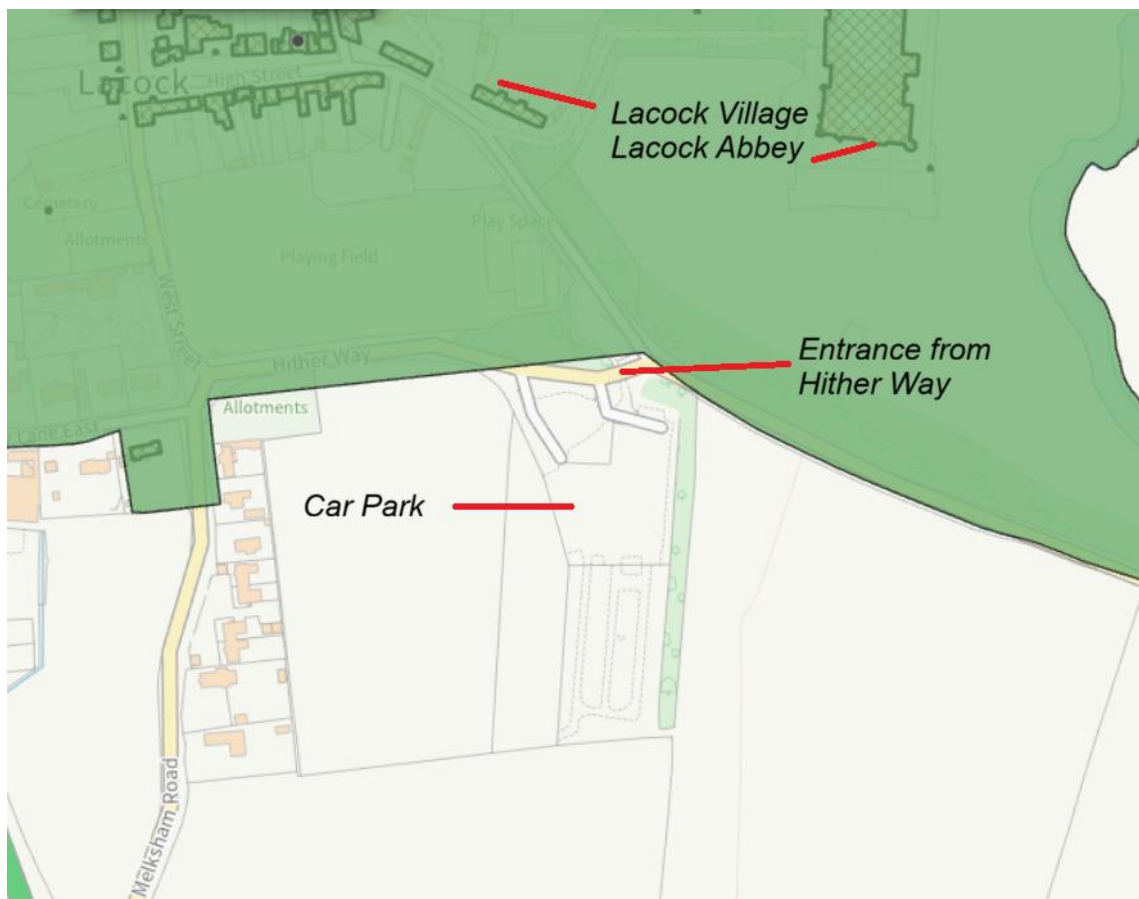
The machines would measure 1.86m tall, with an overall footprint of 0.47m x 0.47m. They would be black and fixed to a concrete base (the two replacement machines would utilise the existing bases).

Note that an application for advertisement consent for the associated signage has been submitted alongside this application, referenced PL/2025/09386

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The site is the National Trust car park south of Hither Way in the village of Lacock. It is accessed from Hither Way, indicated on the plan below. This plan also indicates that the car park is just outside of the Lacock Conservation Area (washed in green on the plan), and whilst there are many listed buildings in Lacock (hatched black) including the Grade I listed Abbey, there are no heritage assets in the vicinity of the car park.

The Abbey is c160m from the car park, with a tree belt providing screening between the two. The grounds of Lacock Abbey are also a registered Park and Garden, designated as Grade II, recognised for their national historical importance. This listing acknowledges the centuries of development in the landscape, from medieval monastic gardens to the later grounds now managed by the National Trust.



Public Right of Way LAC037 runs below the southern boundary of the overflow car park, connecting Melksham Road and Hither Way and is shown in purple on the aerial photograph below. This photograph also shows the trees surrounding the site, and between the site and the Abbey:



PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
19/02773/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 3/5/2019 – To erect a temporary timber information hut within the car park at Hither Way. For the purposes of providing an information point to the car park users and to provide shelter for the car park staff.
N/05/03259/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 15/2/2006 – Three Freestanding Self Powered (Solar) Pay & Display Parking Ticket Machines
PL/2024/03201 - Consent to display an advertisement Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 13/8/2024 – This application is for advertisement consent for 3 boards. Sign 1: A new Welcome & Orientation board at the Lacock hitherway car park, including a map and 6 x A3 advertising clip frames. Sign 2: A new board with a map of Lacock and 4 x A4 advertising c

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

The development plan for Wiltshire comprises the *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)* and any made neighbourhood plans, which remains the principal statutory planning document guiding development across the county. In line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Though the development plan is considered as a whole, those parts deemed to be particularly relevant to this application are listed below:

The adopted *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)*, with particular regard to:

- Core Policy 39 Tourist Development
- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping;
- Core Policy 58 Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment;

Lacock Neighbourhood Plan: Status - Undesignated

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide

ISSUES

The main issues that need to be addressed in this case include:

- Principle of development
- Design and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area
- Impact on Heritage Assets
- Residential Amenity

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Lacock Parish Council: No objection

“At the meeting held on 8 Dec 2025, Lacock Parish Council's decision was to offer No Objection to this proposal.”

REPRESENTATIONS

In accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), the application was publicised by site notice, as there are no nearby neighbours.

No representations had been received at the time of writing.

ASSESSMENT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

In accordance with this statutory requirement, this application has been assessed against the relevant policies of the Development Plan, including the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and, where applicable, any made Neighbourhood Plans. Consideration has also been given to the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as a material consideration in the assessment.

Principle of Development

Core Policy 39 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy supports proposals for tourist and visitor facilities in small villages subject to certain criteria. Development, where practicable should be in existing or replacement buildings. Any proposal needs to carefully consider the need to protect landscapes and environmentally sensitive sites with the objective of providing adequate facilities, enhancing enjoyment and improving the financial viability of the attraction. The proposal is acceptable in principle subject to the matters discussed below.

Design and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that development is of a high-quality design which responds positively to the character and appearance of the area.

The application proposes the replacement of two existing parking payment machines and the installation of a third solar-powered machine measuring 1.86 metres in height, with a footprint of 0.47m x 0.47m.

The site is largely functional in character, being a car park, and is set within a verdant context with trees along the boundaries. Intervening trees also provide screening between the car park and both the Public Right of Way LAC037 (near the southern boundary of the overflow car park) and the northern entrance from Hither Way, ensuring that the new machines would not appear visually prominent. The two machines within the overflow car park would be removed and as such would represent an improvement to the visual character of this part of the car park.

Overall, the machines are modest and functional in scale, well-located within the existing layout, and would not adversely affect the character or appearance of the surrounding area..

Impact on Heritage Assets

The application site lies on the edge of the Lacock Conservation Area and in proximity to a number of designated heritage assets, including Lacock Abbey, a Grade I listed building located approximately 160 metres from the site, and the grounds of Lacock Abbey, which are included on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest at Grade II. The registered park and garden is recognised for its national historic importance, reflecting the historic evolution of the landscape from its medieval monastic origins to the later designed grounds.

The proposal is for the installation of three replacement parking payment machines within the existing car park serving the Abbey, whilst removing two machines from the southern end of the overflow car park. The development would be modest in scale and would not involve any alteration to the historic fabric of the Abbey or its associated structures. Although the registered park and garden lies close to the site, the boundary is defined by a stone wall and established tree belt, which significantly limits intervisibility between the proposed machines and the historic landscape beyond. In this context, the proposal would not detract from the significance or setting of the registered park and garden.

Given the distance from Lacock Abbey and the presence of intervening walls and landscaping, the proposal would not affect the setting of the Grade I listed building, having special regard to the desirability of preserving its setting in accordance with Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Furthermore, given the limited scale and functional nature of the development, and its location at the edge of the Conservation Area, the proposal would preserve its character and appearance in accordance with Section 72(1) of the Act.

Overall, the proposal would result in no harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets, including the listed building, the Conservation Area, or the registered park and garden. The development would therefore accord with the heritage objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and policy CP58 of the WCS.

Amenity

Point vii of Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that development does not result in an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties. Paragraph 135(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework similarly requires development to provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

The proposal has been assessed in terms of its potential impact on residential amenity, including issues of noise, disturbance and visual impact. The development comprises the installation of three parking payment machines within an existing public car park, two of which would replace existing machines, with one additional machine proposed. The site is not located in proximity to any residential dwellings, with the nearest properties on Melksham Road situated approximately 157 metres from the car park.

Given the modest scale and functional nature of the proposal, together with the substantial separation distance to the nearest residential properties, the development would not give rise to unacceptable levels of noise, disturbance or visual intrusion. The proposal would therefore have no adverse impact on residential amenity and would accord with the requirements of Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

It is considered that the proposal for the 3no. pay machines is exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain. Paragraph 17 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Biodiversity Gain Requirements 2024 set out the specific exemptions from BNG. The footprint

of the 3 machines does not impact more than 25sqm of onsite habitat and is not classed as Priority Habitat. The machines will be placed on a concrete base on existing hard surfacing and where existing terminals are already sited.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

The proposed development comprises the replacement of three parking payment machines within the National Trust car park south of Hither Way, Lacock. The machines are modest in scale and functional in design, and the site is largely screened by existing trees. Two machines within the overflow car park would be removed.

The proposal has been assessed in terms of its design and impact on the character and appearance of the area, residential amenity, and the setting of nearby heritage assets, including the Lacock Conservation Area, Lacock Abbey (Grade I), and the grounds of Lacock Abbey registered Park and Garden (Grade II).

Given the limited scale, functional nature, and existing screening, the development would not result in any adverse impacts in these respects.

The development therefore accords with Core Policies 57 and 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework, and it is recommended that the application be approved subject to the standard conditions for installation, maintenance, and removal if no longer required. The recommended conditions are necessary, precise, enforceable, and proportionate, ensuring the parking machines are installed, maintained, and removed if no longer required, in accordance with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Planning Permission be GRANTED, subject to conditions.

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and statement, and the parking payment machines shall be installed in the approved positions and retained thereafter:

Location Plan LA1-01 received 26 November 2025

Proposed Site Plan LA1-02 received 26 November 2025

Proposed Equipment details 100124714-MMD-00-XX-DR-A-2008 received 26 November 2025

Heritage Statement received 28 November 2025

REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out as approved and to safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

3. The parking payment machines shall be maintained in good condition and repair for the duration of their use. If any machines are no longer required for operational use, they shall be removed and the site reinstated to its previous condition to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure that the development remains in a satisfactory condition and does not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area.