

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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Application No: PL/2025/09775
Construction of an oak-framed gazebo (approx. 62m²) with open sides and a tiled roof (ridge height 4.14m), partly on the existing patio and partly on a 71m² extension, enclosed by an extended wooden fence. Sutton Benger Village Hall, Chestnut Road, Sutton Benger, SN15 4RH

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

Recommendations:

☐	No 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.

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 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 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."

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.

Historic England Advice Note 2 – Making changes to Heritage Assets illustrates the application of policies set out in the NPPF in determining applications for PP and LBC.

Site and assets considered: The site is a patio area associated with Sutton Benger village hall and adjacent sports pitches and land. It is located in Sutton Benger Conservation Area.

Proposal: The proposal seeks the erection of an open timber frame gazebo with a tiled roof.

Relevant planning history: ENQ/2025/01008; N/99/02705/FUL – Proposed new village hall to replace existing building with associated parking and landscaping – Approved 07.02.00
N/00/02088/FUL – Storage Shed – Approved 07.12.00 N/02/01532/FUL – Extension of storage to rear of village hall – Approved 14.08.02 N/93/01043/S73 – Permanent retention of existing car park on land adj Village Hall – Approved 05.08.93

Issues: 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 not accompanied by a "Heritage Statement" and as such the application provides no objective assessment of the impact of the proposal and as a result, it fails to meet the requirements of the NPPF.

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.

Assessment: The application site is Sutton Benger Village Hall, which is located on Chestnut Road within the large village of Sutton Benger. It has a substantial curtilage with a large car parking area to the front of the site and an area of open space to the rear, which also includes an existing shed. The site backs onto a recreation ground to the rear, which is an extensive parcel of land for the benefit and use of the local community. The site is adjacent to the Sutton Benger Primary School, and within the vicinity are established residential dwellinghouses. The site is located the Sutton Benger Conservation Area, as well as within Area 2 (Chestnut Road) of the character areas detailed within the Sutton Benger and Draycot Cerne Neighbourhood Development Plan. The immediate vicinity is characterised by materials including Cotswold stone and render.

The application seeks the installation of a proposed wooden gazebo to the rear of the site, adjacent to the existing shed.

The application site is within the Sutton Benger Conservation Area and although not within very close proximity to the numerous listed buildings in the village, it is in a sensitive location in terms of heritage assets.

Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy states that for proposed development within Conservation Areas that ‘...it is expected that development will be of the highest standard in order to maintain and enhance the quality of the area or building, and be sensitive to its character and appearance. In considering applications for new development in such areas, the council will seek to ensure that the form, scale, design and materials of new buildings are complementary to the historic context.’

The proposed gazebo appears to be of good design, using good quality materials. The proposed appearance and scale of the gazebo aligns with Core Policy 58 as it is considered that the form, scale, design and materials of the structure are in-keeping with the locality of the site and would not be deemed to be inappropriate to the appearance of the surrounding area. It would serve to be complimentary to the character of the area, both in terms of the Village Hall itself and the wider conservation area. Indeed, due to its reasonably discreet position within the context of the existing village hall, it is concluded that no harm will be caused to any of the heritage assets.

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.

The impact of the proposals on heritage assets will be neutral and the requirements of current conservation legislation, policy or guidance are considered to be met and there is therefore no objection to the approval of the application.