

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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Application No: PL/2026/00103
Change of use from Class E to a single dwellinghouse and insertion of dormer window, replacement of shop front joinery, replacement of asbestos slates with natural slate and creation of a new door opening from the High Street
7 The Square, Ramsbury, Wiltshire, SN8 2PE

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)
☐	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 66 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.

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 an unlisted building located in Ramsbury Conservation Area. The property affects the setting of a number of listed buildings in the immediate vicinity.

Proposal: The proposal seeks change of use from Class E to a single dwellinghouse and insertion of dormer window, replacement of shop front joinery, replacement of asbestos slates with natural slate and creation of a new door opening from the High Street.

Relevant planning history: 16/06315/FUL - Change of use from Class A2 to Class C3; PL/2024/08967 - Change of use from Class E to a single residential dwelling with the insertion of rooflights to the front elevation and a dormer window to the rear.

Issues: impact on the setting of neighbouring listed buildings, impact on 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 "Design and Access 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 which have aesthetic and architectural interest

and which contribute to the character of the conservation area. The rear of the building has, however, been compromised by extension and alteration during the modern period and is of lesser interest.

Assessment: The application relates to 7 The Square in Ramsbury which lies in a prominent location in the centre of the village. The property lies within the Ramsbury Conservation Area where it is identified as a significant unlisted building. It has the benefit of an existing access to a small courtyard area to the rear that has historically been used for parking associated with the A2 use.

No.7 lies on the western side of The Square, on the left-hand side as one heads northwards from the High Street. It is a corner plot and, as such, has frontages facing both north-east and south/south-east, with the front door positioned between the two.

The front elevation would remain largely as is, with the large shop front windows replaced to match the existing. The rear elevation would be enhanced with the alterations to the existing openings and replacement of poor-quality render and corrugated sheeting with timber cladding and new render. The rear elevation is well-contained and there are no views afforded from within the conservation area.

The proposed internal alterations to create an open-plan living arrangement, do not require permission. However, these changes, together with the inclusion of a dormer and rooflights, will create an enhanced internal layout to create an open plan living arrangement on the ground floor and two bedrooms on the first floor.

In looking at the planning history relating to the site, the most relevant is planning permission 16/06315/FUL which approved the change of use of the premises from A2 to C3 but this has now lapsed. However, this application secured permission for the change of use only and did not include the insertion of the large box dormer and rooflights on the front elevation.

In conservation terms, there are conservation objections to the large box dormer on the rear of the building. The box dormer would not be sympathetic since this would be constructed using the full width of the roof. This would be an inappropriate design solution since it would give the appearance of an extra storey on top of the building.

It is considered that the design of the proposed box dormer could be amended to reflect the dormers on the neighbouring building which would be more sympathetic to the character and appearance of the conservation area:



The applicant is reminded that under legislation there is a duty to pay **special attention** to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a designated Conservation Area, and as such a higher quality of design is needed. This duty is a requirement whether a development proposal is in public view or not.

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 design amendments are required.