

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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Application No: PL/2026/00351 and PL/2026/00479
Change of use from agricultural to a 1 No. holiday-let unit with associated works
Manor Farm, Lower Road, Erlestoke, Devizes, SN10 5UE

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 16 require 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.

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 main farmhouse is a Grade II listed building; the historic farmstead outbuildings and barns are curtilage listed.

Proposal: The proposal seeks change of use from agricultural to a 1 No. holiday-let unit with associated works.

Relevant planning history:

16/11793/FUL - Repair of curtilage listed cart shed and its conversion from agriculture to office; closing of existing access and provision of a new drive and access; parking provision for proposed office use. (Approved)

16/12210/LBC - Repair of curtilage listed cart shed. (Approved)

21/00305/FUL - To install 1no. double door & 2no. Dorma windows & 1no. Velux window. (Refused)

21/01200/LBC - To install 1no. double door & 2no. Dorma windows & 1no. Velux window. (Refused)

21/01737/LBC - Demolish existing building and rebuild to use as a dwelling. (Refused)

21/01067/FUL - Demolish existing building and rebuild to use as a dwelling. (Refused)

PL/2022/01545 - LBC Conversion of former Grain store to C3 short term holiday let. (Approved)

PL/2022/01247 - FUL Conversion of former Grain store to C3 short term holiday let. (Approved)

PL/2022/06461 - LBC - Retrospective permission for change of use for previous agricultural barns to B1 Offices use. (Approved)

PL/2022/06126 - FUL - Retrospective permission for change of use for previous agricultural barns to B1 Offices use. (Approved)

PL/2022/07528 - HH Planning -Alterations to fenestrations, new dormer windows, addition of a new driveway and retrospective consent for works to the Farmhouse and Outbuildings. (Refused)

PL/2022/07797 - LBC -Alterations to fenestrations, new dormer windows, addition of a new driveway and retrospective consent for works to the Farmhouse and Outbuildings. (Refused)

PL/2023/04280- LBC - Alterations to fenestrations to Listed Farmhouse. (Refused)

PL/2023/04347 - HH Planning - Alterations to fenestrations, the addition of a new driveway & for retrospective consent for works to the farmhouse & outbuilding. (Approved)

PL/2023/04757 LBC - Alterations to fenestrations, the addition of a new driveway & for retrospective consent for works to the farmhouse & outbuilding. (Approved)

PL/2023/07289 - LBC windows - Alterations to fenestrations to Farmhouse. (Approved)

PL/2024/04328 - LBC - Increase width of terrace doors, additional internal door, insulate section of suspected timber floor, panelling. (Approved)

Issues: impact on the curtilage listed building, impact on the setting of neighbouring listed buildings.

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 applications are accompanied by a “Design, Access and Heritage 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 vernacular materials which have significant aesthetic and architectural interest.

Assessment: Manor Farm, Lower Road, Erlestoke is a Grade II listed farmhouse which lies to the north of Erlestoke. The farmhouse is situated to the north west of a series of former agricultural buildings laid out in courtyard formations. This application relates to buildings 2 and 3, the Tractor Shed and Stable 1. These buildings form part of the curtilage listing of the Farmhouse.

Both of the agricultural buildings are in poor condition and are considered at risk of collapse. Several emergency repairs have been carried out over the last few years by the current owners.

The Stable has some cracks to the masonry in the north west corner that need repairing, and possibly require underpinning of the foundations. The roof covering is incomplete and is currently covered with tarpaulin to prevent any further water ingress. The roof structure needs significant repair and stabilisation through the replacement of removed members and augmentation of existing failed members. Roof leaks have caused damage to some of the boarding on the intermediate floor, the structural timbers appear in relatively good condition from what is accessible and visible. Repairs have been undertaken to several beams where they bear onto the south wall. Metal strapping added. Further repair work will be needed in order to stabilise these and allow the removal of the temporary props.

The Tractor Shed has the brickwork to the front elevation bowing significantly. The wall plate to the east has rotten and the brickwork above is collapsing. The principal trusses are also bowed.

It is proposed to bring both buildings into ancillary accommodation for the farmhouse. This will give them a viable use, whilst not requiring any changes to the surrounding access. Several key objectives have informed the proposal:

- i) Keeping all the sound, good quality fabric.
- ii) Maintaining the agricultural character of the buildings and their relationship to their surroundings.
- iii) Reducing the structural load on the Stable.

It is proposed to rebuild the roof and front wall of the Tractor Shed, using the same palette of materials. The materials will ensure the new fabric sits comfortably in the setting, whilst the

detailing will allow historical clarity. The existing fabric will be insulated internally, and the boarding to the Stable floor removed (this is modern sheet material in poor condition). The open layout of the Stable is to be retained including the historical partition to leave a palimpsest of its former use. This partition will be used to divide the living space from the proposed kitchen / diner. The layout of the tractor shed is to be divided to provide two bedrooms and a bathroom. Rooflights are proposed to the new Tractor Shed roof, to light the Stable from the north, meaning a well lit space can be created with no additional openings in the fabric of the Stable. A new vapour permeable insulated floor (recycled glass aggregate) is proposed throughout.

In conservation terms the principle of the proposed conversion and new use is considered acceptable. However, I am concerned that the form and appearance of both the Stable and Tractor Shed would not be maintained since the window and door joinery and openings would be altered which would change their external form, character and appearance. With the Tractor Shed I am particularly concerned at the loss of the brickwork of the front elevation and the infilling of the existing openings. With the Stable, the existing window fenestration would not be maintained and the proposed single glazed opening would also not maintain the character and appearance of the building. Whilst a number of these features are in poor condition, these could be rebuilt or replaced to match the original form and appearance and thereby reinstate the original vernacular appearance of the outbuildings.

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 principal is acceptable however the original form, character and appearance of the outbuildings need to be better preserved and enhanced. Details are also required for thermal upgrading and insulation. I would also expect to see any roof lights be conservation type. As such amendments and further details are required.