

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

URBAN DESIGN

Officer name:

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Wiltshire Council

Date: 30.01.2026

Application No: PL/2025/09541

Proposal: Reserved Matters (Scale, Layout, External appearance and Landscaping) pursuant to condition 2 of PL/2022/08744 - Outline application (all matters reserved except for access) for part conversion and part redevelopment of the Devizes Community Hospital site to provide up to 58 no. residential dwellings (Use Class C3) and circa 67.7sqm flexible commercial unit (Use Class E), including the retention and conversion of two original buildings to the east of the site, with associated landscaping and parking.

Site Address: Devizes Community Hospital, New Park Road, Devizes, Wilts, SN10 1EF

Case Officer: Helena Carney

Reference:

Drawings and documents indexed 4th December 2025 on application webpage.

Policy and guidance:

- Wiltshire Core Strategy, Core Policy 57 'Ensuring high quality design and place shaping' (abbreviated CP57)
- Wiltshire Local Plan Review - Pre-Submission Draft 2020-2038 (Regulation 19) (September 2023) (abbreviated WLPR)
- Wiltshire Design Guide – Wiltshire Council Supplementary Planning Document adopted 25th March 2024 (abbreviated WDG)
- National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG December 2024) (abbreviated NPPF)
- National Design Guide (MHCLG January 2021) (abbreviated NDG)
- Building for a Healthy Life (Homes England June 2020) (referenced in the NPPF) (abbreviated BfHL)
- Streets for a Healthy Life: A companion guide to Building for a Healthy Life (Homes England) (abbreviated SFHL).
- Devizes Area Neighbourhood Plan – Made July 2015 (abbreviated DNP)

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.

Observations

Condition 2 - No development shall commence on site until details of the following (in respect of which approval is expressly reserved) have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority: (a) The scale of the development; (b) The layout of the development; (c) The external appearance of the development; (d) The landscaping of the site; The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: The application was made in part for outline planning permission and is granted to comply with the provisions of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Article 5 (1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Condition 4 - The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- Drg Ref: DH- AFA - XX - RF - DR - A - 1000 Rev P2 Location Plan
- Drg Ref: DH- AFA - XX - ZZ - DR - A - 1151 Rev P3 - Heritage & Urban Design Parameter Plan
- Drg Ref: DH- XX - ZZ - DR – 1150 Rev P3 - Ecological Parameters Plan

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Condition 5 - The development shall be carried out in general accordance with the design principles set out in the Outline Planning Design and Access Statement Rev P1 (01/11/22).

REASON: The Design and Access Statement sets out clear and positive requirements (in line with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy) for designers at Reserved Matters to take forward.

The submitted material provides detailed information relating to the proposed new-build elements of the scheme. While the site plan and supporting drawings illustrate the wider application boundary, no detailed proposals have been provided for the retention and conversion of the two original buildings to the east of the site. As such, this assessment focuses solely on the new-build components of the development.

I note the Conservation Officer's comments, which raise no objection to the scale and form of the proposed development with regard to the impact on the non-designated heritage assets on the site or the wider conservation area.

Access arrangements were established and approved at the outline stage and therefore do not form part of the reserved matters for consideration. A minor amendment to the approved access from Couch Lane has been proposed; this alteration has been reviewed by the Highways Authority, who have confirmed that it raises no objection.

The design proposals demonstrate positive intent, particularly through the creation of an internal courtyard, the incorporation of innovative terraced housetypes, and the provision of well-considered pedestrian and cycle routes. However, several elements of the scheme require further clarification or revision to ensure they fully meet expected design standards. The following comments set out the key matters that the applicant should address.

Comments

- 1) Due to the close relationship between Blocks C and D, there is a significant risk of overlooking between habitable rooms, particularly bedrooms. The applicant should provide a clear privacy strategy; options may include obscure glazing to the first-floor south-facing windows of Block D or alternative design measures to ensure adequate separation and residential amenity.

A privacy strip with well-considered, low-height planting or railing should be introduced along the ground-floor northern frontage of Block D (and F) to define defensible space, support natural

surveillance, and protect residents' privacy within the adjacent open space. Any landscape mitigation would need Landscape Officer approval, whom I would defer to.

- 2) In accordance with WDG expectation 9.3.5 robust plot boundary interfaces should be provided between plots and the adjacent public or shared spaces. For a comprehensive understanding of the scheme and its visual impact, the applicant should supply a proposed boundary materials and details plan – including between plots.
- 3) It is unclear from the submitted information how the proposed waste-collection arrangements for Block C comply with Wiltshire Council's *Waste Storage and Collection: Guidance for Developers* SPD. In particular, the applicant should demonstrate that residents would not be required to carry waste through their homes in a way that is considered unreasonable under the SPD.
- 4) The submitted information does not identify the location or distribution of the affordable houses and apartments within the scheme. Neither the covering letter nor the Design and Access Statement provide any reference to affordable housing, despite the outline planning permission requiring the delivery of 17 affordable homes. To ensure clarity, the applicant should provide a tenure plan clearly showing the position, type, and distribution of all affordable units within the proposed layout.
- 5) The following comments relate to Block A:
 - a. While the inclusion of green roofs is welcomed, further information is required on safe and practical access for maintenance. If safe access cannot be satisfactorily demonstrated, the applicant should consider an alternative roof form - such as a shallow-pitched standing seam metal roof, potentially with a modest central ridge - to maintain visual quality and long-term manageability.
 - b. Where balconies are shared between apartments, robust and durable privacy screens should be incorporated to ensure adequate amenity and limit overlooking. The applicant should provide details confirming the type, height, and materiality of these screens.
 - c. The proposed clock feature appears visually unresolved and may not contribute positively to the overall architectural expression, particularly given the more successful feature treatment already present on Block D. This could instead present an opportunity to introduce a bespoke artistic element - such as a weathervane, finial, or similar - drawing inspiration from the site's historical context.
- 6) A full and detailed materials specification must be submitted, accompanied by physical material samples. These samples should ideally be presented within a coordinated on-site materials panel to allow proper assessment of colour, texture, and quality.
- 7) In addition to the Highway Officer's comments on parking, the limited separation between parking bays 26-27 and 30-31 raises concerns, and their proximity to the proposed pedestrian and cycle link to Commercial Road may compromise safety and the clarity of movement through this part of the site.
- 8) The submitted drawings do not include a proposed canal-side elevation, and the street elevation from Commercial Road is only partially provided. In addition, the proposed street elevation through development looking north omits the railings/gate to the side of Block E. For a comprehensive understanding of the scheme and its visual impact, the applicant should supply the missing street elevations including adjacent context.
- 9) In accordance with WDG Expectation 9.2 - which specifies minimum garden areas, minimum garden lengths, minimum balcony or terrace areas, and overshadowing requirements - it appears that several plots may not meet these standards. To enable a full and comprehensive assessment, the applicant should provide a plan clearly identifying which plots comply with Expectation 9.2 and which do not.