

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

URBAN DESIGN

Officer name:

James Weddell RIBA
Senior Urban Design Officer
Wiltshire Council

Date: 18.02.2026

Application No: PL/2026/00135

Proposal: Approval of reserved matters for the demolition of existing structures and construction of 90 homes, with areas of open space, a play area, sustainable drainage infrastructure, internal roads, paths and parking areas, landscaping and associated works, plant and infrastructure and discharge of conditions 7 (boundary with Abberd Farm), 8 (Surface Water), 9 (Surface Water), 14 (Construction Ecological Management Plan), 15 (Landscape Ecological Management Plan), 16 (Lighting), 17 (Wildlife Features) and 18 (Noise Assessment) of outline planning permission PL/2022/07893

Site Address: Land off Spitfire Road, Calne. SN11 8TE

Case Officer: Peter Crozier

Reference:

Drawings and documents indexed 8th January 2026 on the 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)
- Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan (Made March 2025) (abbreviated CCNP)
- CCNP Design Guidelines and Codes (Final Report March 2023) (abbreviated DGC)

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

Following the refusal of outline application PL/2022/07893, permission was granted on appeal (APP/Y3940/W/24/3351528) with conditions governing the design of the development. The principal design conditions are as follows:

3. Reserved Matters: No development hereby permitted shall commence until details of the following matters (in respect of which approval is expressly reserved) have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority:

- a) the access to and within the site;
- b) the scale of the development;
- c) the layout of the development;
- d) the external appearance of the development; and
- e) the landscaping of the site.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The reserved matters shall be submitted as a single phase unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority through the submission of a phasing plan and the development shall be implemented in accordance with that approved plan.

and

4. Approved Plans: The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing numbers:

- a) Location Plan 343.P.1.2 K
- b) Ecological Parameters Plan 10185 C

Objection

The development proposals do not accord with Condition 4 in so far as the development proposals would not accord with the approved Ecology Parameter Plan (EPP) and therefore would not constitute a high quality of design and place shaping required by CP57 in this regard for the following reasons:

Comments related to the EPP

- 1) The planted native hedgerows along the primary street and secondary street have been omitted. The reason for this is given in the Statement of Compliance (SoC) (page 23) as:
10 - Hedges in adopted highway removed as unrealistic.

The native hedgerows were shown within verges not within the adopted highway. See comment below.

Recommendation: This matter was raised at Pre-Application but has not been addressed. The applicant should demonstrate how the layout will incorporate the required native hedgerows to comply with the approved Ecology Parameters Plan.

- 2) The proposed layout omits verges incorporating street trees along both the primary and secondary streets. The Statement of Compliance (page 39) explains this as:
04 - Relocation of the treed verge into front gardens, and
05 - Removal of the grassed verge to help create a clearer hierarchy of streets.

However, national and local design guidance consistently recommends the use of verges and street trees as key elements in defining a clear street hierarchy and supporting high-quality, landscape-led place-making. Streets for a Healthy Life (SfHL) illustrates this through its street typologies - particularly the 'secondary street' type, which aligns with the role of the proposed primary street in this development (as it does not contain a bus route). SfHL's examples on pages 40-41 show what successful 'green' streets look like: tree-lined routes with verges that contribute positively to character, comfort, and enclosure.

By contrast, the current proposals more closely resemble the ‘red’ examples shown on pages 42-43, where the absence of verges and reduced tree planting results in harder, less distinctive street environments. This represents a noticeable departure from established design guidance and best practice.

Tree-lined streets are a key feature of high-quality urban design, as endorsed by national and local guidance including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Building for a Healthy Life (BfHL), and the Wiltshire Design Guide. Trees, layered landscaping, and SuDS features within the streets contribute to well-defined, healthy streets and public spaces. To ensure their long-term protection and effective maintenance, these elements should be located in communal, publicly managed areas - not within private plots, as currently proposed.

While the front gardens along the primary street have been deepened to incorporate the verge, this change increases the likelihood that driveways will be extended to provide additional on-plot parking. If this occurs, car parking will become a visually dominant feature along the frontage, to the detriment of the proposed character and streetscape quality.

Recommendation: This matter was raised at Pre-Application but has not been addressed. The applicant should demonstrate how the layout will incorporate the required street-tree verges to comply with the approved Ecology Parameters Plan.

- 3) During Pre-application discussions, several reductions in retained hedgerows, buffer widths and associated habitats - compared with the approved Ecology Parameters Plan (EPP) - were identified. These issues remain outstanding:

- **Hedgerow H3:**
The length of H3 shown as retained is less than that indicated on the EPP, and the offset on both sides has been reduced. This also reduces the associated reptile habitat. Although the Statement of Conformity (p.24) claims that more of H3 is being retained, this is not evident on the submitted plans.
- **Hedgerow H5 buffer:**
The width of the amenity grassland adjacent to H5 has been reduced. The EPP shows a minimum buffer of 2.2 m; however, parts of the proposed buffer fall below this standard, and the bin muster point (BM) area is shown within the buffer.
- **Offsets to H9 and H10:**
The offset distance has been reduced compared to the EPP. The minimum width on the EPP is 2.2 m, yet Plots 86 and 90 encroach within this distance.
- **Street layout adjacent to H7 and H10:**
The EPP shows a continuous edge street formed by two secondary streets joined by a private drive. The current proposals instead show two disconnected private drives. This contradicts BfHL guidance:
 - “What red looks like” (p.19) cautions against extensive use of private drives.
 - “What green looks like” (p.17) promotes connected street patterns and continuous edge streets.
 - At minimum, BfHL (p.45) advises that the ends of cul-de-sacs or communal drives should be connected via a surfaced pedestrian/cycle path.

In addition, the buffer to H7 and the reptile habitat opposite Plots 33–35 and 38 has been reduced.

- **Reduction in proposed tree planting:**
While the EPP appears indicative, the number of proposed urban small trees shown on the Planning Layout and Landscape Strategy Plan is significantly reduced, including within rear gardens and along the northern, eastern, and southern site boundaries. Wiltshire forms part of the Western Forest - a new National Forest whose objective is to substantially increase canopy cover. The aims of National Forests are a material planning consideration (NPPF 2024, para 152).

- **Plot 38 siting:**

The EPP shows buildings along this edge set back from H2, H7 and H9. Plot 38 is now positioned closer to H10 and encroaches into the buffer shown on the EPP. As a minimum, Plot 38 should be set back 4.0 m from H10, consistent with the dark corridor requirement for H11.

Recommendation: These matters were raised at Pre-application but have not yet been addressed. The applicant should demonstrate how the layout will maintain the buffer offsets required to comply with the approved Ecology Parameters Plan.

To ensure full compliance with CCNP Policy NE4 and reinforce landscape integration, woodland planting should be provided along the northern, eastern and southern boundaries within the landscape buffers. This will soften the settlement edge, enhance biodiversity and create a more natural transition to the surrounding countryside.

Landscape and ecological mitigation should, however, follow the relevant officer's advice, and I will defer to them as needed.

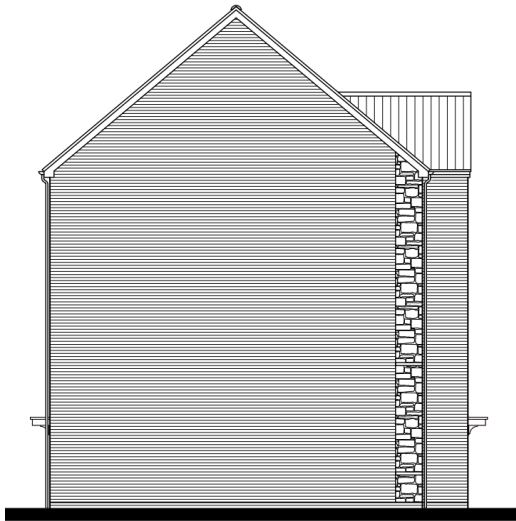
Comments not related to the EPP

- 4) Frontage car parking overwhelms the public realm - notably plots 53 to 62 and 9 to 11 - leaving little room for meaningful landscaping. This design choice mirrors the 'red' examples in BfHL (pp. 72-73), and should be rethought in favour of the 'green' principles (pp. 70-71) that promote healthier, more attractive streetscapes - 'Frontage parking where the space equivalent to a parking space is given over to green relief every **four bays** or so'.
- 5) The transition in street character between the secondary and tertiary routes on the eastern side of the site - marked by the change in street surface - would be more clearly defined if plots 43 and 50 were repositioned to the locations currently occupied by plots 46 and 47. This adjustment would bring the front elevations closer to the street edge and introduce gable features that strengthen views along the internal street vista.
- 6) WDG Expectation 9.2.2 states that the minimum garden area for all houses should be at least equivalent to the building footprint. It appears that the garden areas for Plots 2, 30 and 59 may fall below this requirement. Please provide a plan demonstrating compliance with Expectation 9.2.2, indicating which plots meet the requirement and which do not, to enable a full and accurate assessment.

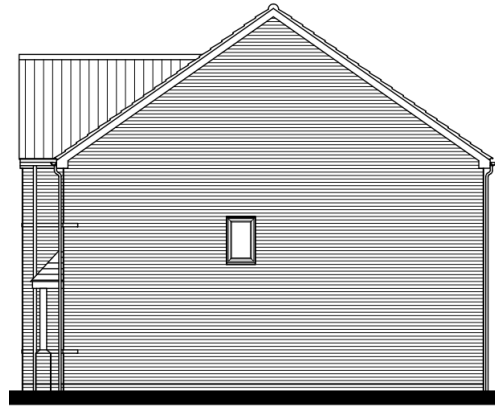
Context and Identity: Appearance

- 7) Street/street corner return elevations and street/open space corner return elevations have largely attractively placed and proportioned windows utilising house types that are consciously designed for this purpose, but there are the following exceptions below in locations. These would represent 'what red looks like' BfHL (pp 54-55) rather than the preferred 'what green looks like' (pp 52-53), and WDG expectation 4.2.8. *'Where buildings are on a corner both public elevations should be designed as 'frontages' and have windows from habitable rooms in them'.*

Block A (no windows)



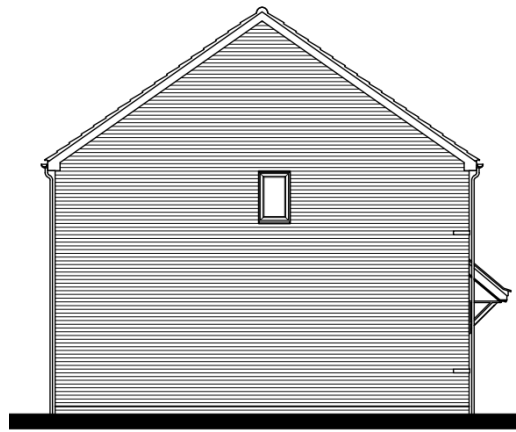
Plot 18 Oakham (stair well window only)



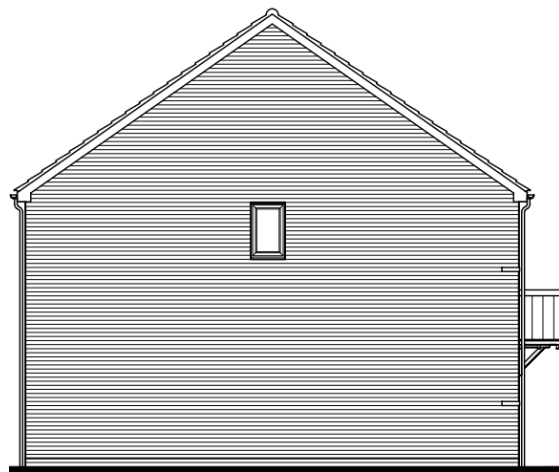
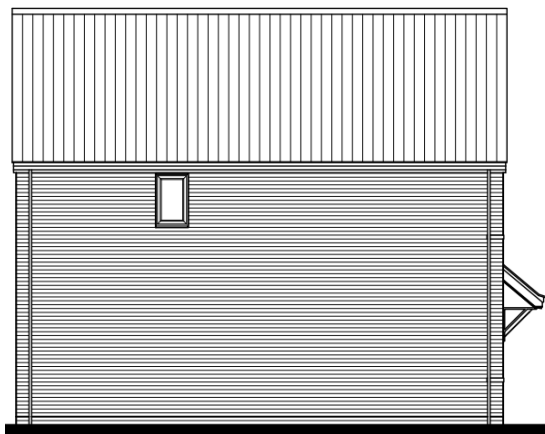
Plot 27 etc. Durham (wc windows only)



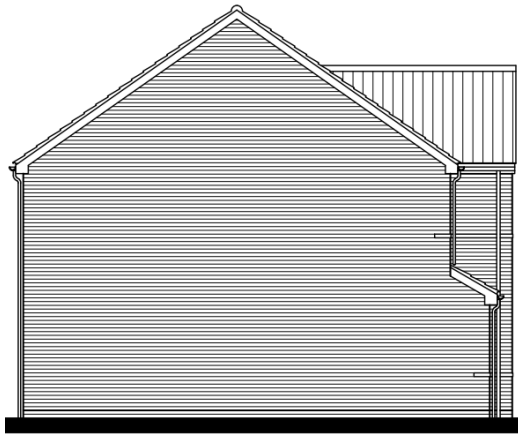
Plot 62 Cranford (wc window only)



Plot 63 etc. Gosford (landing window only) Plot 76 Fulford (wc window only)



Plot 86 Lytham (no windows)



- 8) The materials plan should include the specification for the materials proposed, not simply roughcast render, recon stone, red brick 1, red brick 2, roof tile 1, roof tile 2, windows grey UPVC etc. Sample materials should be provided preferably within a sample panel on site to enable a full and accurate assessment.

Where the primary facing material turns a corner within the public realm preference would be for the return elevation to be in the same facing material. This includes plots 1, 63, 72, 73, 76, 85 and Block A.

The following plots would benefit from render to the primary and return elevations to match to principle of emphasising corner turning plots: 9, 18, 22, 33, 38, 61/62 and 86. With regards to note 5) above, relocated plots 43 and 50 should be render faced.

- 9) Boundary materials have been shown on the Planning Layout Plan. For clarity, a separate Boundary Materials Plan would be welcome to enable a full and accurate assessment. However, the following initial points should be addressed:
- Side boundary walls to stone-faced buildings should be in a similar material including plots 3, 9 and 21, 62 and 63, and 82.
 - It is not clear from the information provided, but where retaining structures are included in the public realm these should be topped with a low wall/faced in stone with feature coping.
 - It is not clear from the information if a boundary detail is proposed between the LAP and plots 9 to 17. Preference would be for a low stone wall with feature coping to screen the parking area.