



Wilts & Berks Canal Trust

Restoring 70 miles of canal and towpath for the benefit of local communities, wildlife and leisure.

Patron: Her Majesty the Queen

Wiltshire Planning Department
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
BA14 8JN

25th February 2026

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Consultation on PL/2026/00347 Reserved Matters (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale) Following Outline Planning Permission PL/2022/02452 for 140 Dwellings, a Habitat Support Area and Associated Landscaping and Works

The Trust notes the presence of the former Wilts & Berks Canal route on the site and also notes with disappointment that it has not been consulted at any stage in the development of this scheme. The former canal has not been given proper consideration in this application and in the outline consent PL/2022/02452. Therefore the Trust objects to the application.

The Core Policy 53 Wiltshire's Canals provides safeguarding for the former canal route and its restoration. Regarding the canal sections that will not be restored as a navigable canal it says:

“Proposals will be permitted that are designed to develop the canal's recreational and nature conservation potential, in particular, the use of the old line of the canal for walking, cycling and interpretation.”

The former canal route lies within the northern boundary of the site and does not appear to be affected by the housing layout, instead lying within the proposed green space. A public right of way path now follows the route.

In the outline application the Heritage Statement refers to the low heritage significance of the former canal route and notes that there does not appear to be any evidence remaining of associated structures. It quotes the Core Policy 53. The Planning Statement refers to the protected route of the canal route and again quotes the Core Policy 53 as relevant. In para. 6.110 the Planning Statement refers to the Heritage Statement conclusion that the proposed development will result in a “small enhancement” as a result of the proposals. It is not clear what enhancement is proposed.

In the current reserved matters application the Planning Statement notes the presence of the former canal route but does not list the Core Policy 53 in the section on relevant planning policy context. The Design Statement includes in the list of opportunities (page 13):

13. Ability to provide information boards along the existing Public Right of Way (CRIC34) in relation to the former Wiltshire and Berkshire canal and canal features once present.

This opportunity does not appear to have been developed and included in the documents submitted with the application.

In summary, the Trust concludes that the presence of the safeguarded canal route has been recognised but there does not appear to be any proposal to enhance it as suggested by the Design Statement or otherwise in order to comply with the safeguarding policy.

The Trust proposes that the developer should be required to identify for approval the measures to be taken for compliance and accepts that suitable information boards may be part of the solution. The Trust is willing to assist in identifying the measures.

Yours Faithfully
Rod Hacker



Head of Planning, WBCT

