

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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Application No: **PL/2025/09780**

Outline planning application for the construction of 295 homes; public open space including formal play space and allotments; sustainable drainage systems and associated infrastructure; a 100 place nursery and access points for pedestrians and cyclists. All matters are reserved except for access, the principal point of access is to be provided from a new northern arm onto an improved arrangement of the Eastern Way/A3102 roundabout junction and an emergency access onto the A3102.
Land North of A3102, Melksham

Please find following comments in respect of the above application(s).

Recommendations:

☐	No comment
☐	Support subject to comment below
☐	Support subject to conditions (as set out below)
☐	Object (for reasons set out below)
☒	No objections subject to comment below

Scope of comments: the following comments relate to the built historic environment.

Site: The site lies to the east of the modern edge of Melksham on agricultural fields to the north of the A3102 and alongside New Road. The land is level and generally open and any development will be prominent within its surroundings, including potentially in longer views from the higher land to the east (I assume that advice will be provided by the Council's Landscape team as to whether the landscape mitigation to the east of the site is sufficient to mitigate the impacts in views from the higher ground).

Some distance to the north, Woodrow House Farm is a grade II listed building. Another historic farm, the listed Blackmore Farm lies to the east.

Proposal: the proposals seek outline consent for the construction of 295 houses accessed from A3102. The road layout suggests that it is anticipated that development will continue to the north in due course. This application follows previous full applications and the comments below reflect those submitted for that application.

Policy: The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines government policy, including its policy in respect of the historic environment (Section 16). The policy requires that great weight be given to the conservation of heritage assets and advises a balanced approach with the public benefits which may result

from proposals being weighed against any harm caused. National Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on interpreting the NPPF.

The Council's Core Strategy 'Core Policy 57: Ensuring high quality design and place shaping' requires a high standard of design in all new developments to ensure that objectives such as 'i. enhancing local distinctiveness by responding to the value of the natural and historic environment' and 'iv. being sympathetic to and conserving historic buildings and historic landscapes' are met.

The Council's Core Strategy 'Core Policy 58: Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment' requires that designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved. It is also required that distinctive elements of Wiltshire's historic environment, including non-designated heritage assets, which contribute to a sense of local character and identity will be conserved, and where possible enhanced.

Assets considered: the Grade II listed Woodrow Farmhouse and the non-designated No. 243 New Road which is noted on the HER as a partially extant C19 farmstead.

Assessment: 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 "Heritage Impact Assessment". Paragraph 208 also provides for the local planning authority to make its own assessment of impact.

The Assessment considers various designated heritage assets and identifies Woodrow Farm as the only designated heritage asset which may be impacted by the proposed development. It notes that "With the provision of a degree of landscape buffer or screening to soften the northern edge of the proposed development, it is not considered that the level of change posed within the setting of Woodrow House Farmhouse would be sufficient to cause any level of harm to its significance as a designated heritage asset".

I am generally in agreement with the identification of affected assets and assessment of the significance of Woodrow Farm and this conclusion. The site landscaping details have been developed during the life of the previous application and indicate the inclusion of additional planting, including further trees which will assist in mitigating any harm to the setting of Woodrow Farm via the filtering of views towards the edge of the development.

However, in addition, I have previously noted that No. 243 New Road which is noted on the HER as a partially extant C19 farmstead and advised that consideration is required (within an amended HIA) as to whether this property should be considered as a non-designated heritage asset, in which case additional landscaping/buffer may be required to preserve its significance.

Summary: The proposals would not result in any direct impact on designated or non designated heritage assets. However, it is unclear that any consideration has been given to the potential non-designated asset No.243 New Road and requirements for mitigation in this respect.

Subject to the comment above being addressed, the proposals could meet the requirements of CP57 and 58 and para 2015-16 of the NPPF and there would be no objection to an application from the point of view of the historic built environment.