

Heritage & Design Statement – Turnpike Cottage, Charlton, Malmesbury, Wiltshire SN16 9DL

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this statement is to:

- **Support the planning application** by demonstrating that the proposed development is appropriate for the site and its surroundings.
- **Assess the heritage impact** of the proposed works on Turnpike Cottage, a non-designated heritage asset, and its contribution to the historic character of Charlton.
- **Address design considerations**, including form, scale, materials, and integration with the streetscape, to ensure the proposals are sympathetic to the vernacular character of the building.
- **Demonstrate compliance with planning policy**, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 16 and relevant policies from the Wiltshire Core Strategy (CP57 and CP58), relating to the conservation of the historic environment and high-quality design.

This report therefore provides a comprehensive assessment of the proposed development in terms of **heritage significance, design integrity, and planning policy compliance**, forming part of the evidence base for consideration by Wiltshire Council.

2. Site Location & Context

- Charlton is a small village located between Malmesbury and Cricklade and the property sits towards the eastern end within the Conservation Area. The village has several amenities including a public house (temporarily closed), village hall and church. Larger chain stores can be found in Malmesbury, Cirencester and Swindon all accessible via car. Describe village character and settlement pattern.
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3. Historic Background & Significance

1. Historic Development of Malmesbury and Charlton

Malmesbury — Historic Market Town

- **Early significance:** Malmesbury is one of England's oldest boroughs, with a settlement traceable back to at least the **Saxon period**. It was an important local centre long before the Norman Conquest.
- **Medieval importance:** The town developed around **Malmesbury Abbey**, a major religious and educational institution founded in the 7th century, which shaped early settlement patterns and local economy.
- **Strategic transport role:** During the English Civil War, Malmesbury's position on the road network made it strategically important, and it changed hands several times in the 1640s.
- **19th century infrastructure:** Later transport improvements included the **Malmesbury branch railway line** opening in 1877, linking the town to the Great Western Main Line, reflecting ongoing adaptation to changing transport needs.

Charlton — Rural Settlement

- **Parish setting:** Charlton was historically part of the **Malmesbury Hundred**, an ancient administrative division dating from the Saxon period, showing long-term occupation and integration into regional landholding systems.
- **Settlement pattern and economy:** Early records show Charlton had a **water mill in the medieval period** and later diversified into typical rural trades such as weaving, shoe-making, and blacksmithing by the 18th and 19th centuries.
- **Road connections:** The village developed along historic routes aligned roughly east-west, connecting to larger roads to Malmesbury and beyond.
- **19th century population:** Records show a relatively stable small population in the 19th and early 20th centuries, illustrating Charlton's role as a small but persistent rural community rather than a growing town.

2. Historic Transport and Turnpikes in the Area

Turnpike Roads in 18th–19th Centuries

- In the mid-18th century England's road network was in poor condition, and **Turnpike Trusts** were established by Acts of Parliament to improve key inter-town routes. Local trusts funded maintenance by charging tolls to travellers.
- Around **1755**, the **Faringdon to Acton Turville Turnpike** was created, and later turnpikes in the region were established to improve connections through Wiltshire and neighbouring counties. These formed the basis for today's major routes like the **A429** and **B4040**.
- Turnpikes dramatically altered regional movement and helped standardise through-routes connecting towns like Malmesbury with Cricklade, Swindon, and Chippenham. The tolls were removed in the **1870s**, reflecting changing transport funding and infrastructure as railways expanded.

3. Significance of Turnpike Cottage

Turnpike Cottage as a Toll Keeper's House

- **Function:** Turnpike cottages were built to house the **tollkeeper** responsible for collecting tolls on a turnpike road — a key role in the 18th–19th century transport system.
- **Historic date:** Local photographic and mapping records indicate the former turnpike house in Charlton was constructed **around 1808**. The associated turnpike was **disturnpiked (tolls removed) in 1876**, marking its operational lifespan within the “golden age” of turnpikes before competition from railways and local taxation.
- **Location and road context:** The building's location on or near a historic turnpike aligns with documentary evidence showing roads in and out of Charlton being turnpiked in the **mid-18th century** and remaining key routes into the 19th century.
- **Architectural significance:** As a **vernacular dwelling associated with historic transport infrastructure**, the cottage is representative of buildings that supported key regional economic and transport functions. Its form and location reflect a functional typology — **small roadside houses linked to the turnpike system** rather than purely domestic architecture.
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4. Architectural Character

- Natural cotswold tiles and dress stone front elevation with softwood windows. This building is a 2 story building with the first floor in the slope of the roof
- There is a poorly constructed extension at the rear of the building. It is rendered and built with walls one brick wide.

5. Statement of Significance

- This building has aesthetic, historic, communal, significance
 - Architectural: Dressed Stone walls and softwood window with an arched design.
 - Historic: associated with local transport/turnpike history
 - Contribution: streetscape, rural village character
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6. Proposed Development

- The Proposal is to extend the rear elevation to be subservient to the host building.
- The walls are to be rendered with the roof to be covered in clay tiles. Windows to be softwood to maintain the scale proportions and maintain character.

7. Heritage Impact Assessment

- The proposal will be visual from the road. To reduce its impact the design is subservient.
- Reference NPPF paragraph 202: “no harm” or “less than substantial harm.”

8. Planning Policy Context

8.1 National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It is a material consideration in determining planning applications and places significant emphasis on the **conservation and enhancement of the historic environment**.

Key relevant sections of the NPPF include:

Section 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

- Paragraph **199** advises that heritage assets should be identified and assessed to understand their significance and the impact of proposed development.
- Paragraph **200** requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected and demonstrate understanding of their setting.
- Paragraph **202** states where there would be **no harm or less than substantial harm** to the significance of a heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against public benefits.

In the context of Turnpike Cottage, the proposals have been developed to **retain the traditional character and form of the building**, ensuring that the building’s historic and architectural significance is conserved. There is **no loss of significance** arising from the proposed works. Where change is proposed, it is **sympathetic to the existing form and character of the cottage and its setting**, consistent with the principles of sustainable development advocated in the NPPF.

The proposal therefore aligns with the NPPF’s overarching objective to **conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance** (NPPF Sections 16.199–202), maintaining the local identity and historic integrity of the area.

8.2 Local Policy

The development plan for this area comprises the **Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)**, adopted by **Wiltshire Council**, which contains locally specific policies relating to design quality and heritage protection.

The most relevant local planning policies are:

Core Policy 57 – Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping

- This policy requires that new development responds positively to both the **existing character and local distinctiveness** of the area.
- Development should create a **sense of place** through appropriate architectural design, scale, and detailing in keeping with the surrounding built environment.

Core Policy 58 – Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment

- This policy seeks to **protect, conserve and where possible enhance heritage assets and their settings**.
- It expects proposals affecting heritage assets to avoid harm to the special architectural or historic interest of buildings and their surroundings.

The proposals for Turnpike Cottage have been designed to respect the **traditional vernacular character** of the cottage, retaining the building’s form, scale, and materiality. No significant architectural features are lost, and any alterations proposed are sympathetic in terms of **proportion, detailing, and materials**. As a result, the proposals align directly with the requirements of both CP57 and CP58 by:

- Responding positively to local character and settlement pattern;
 - Minimising any potential impact on the historic environment;
 - Protecting the **significance of a non-designated heritage asset** (the vernacular cottage and its contribution to the village character);
 - Providing clear justification and design rationale for the works proposed.
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8.3 Summary of Policy Compliance

The proposed development at Turnpike Cottage has been formulated to ensure it is **fully compliant** with both national and local planning policy relating to heritage and design:

Policy Source	Requirement	Demonstrated By
NPPF Section 16	Conservation of historic environment; proportionate assessment of impact	No harm to building significance; sympathetic alterations
Wiltshire Core Strategy CP57	High quality design responding to local character	Design respects scale, materials and vernacular features
Wiltshire Core	Protection and enhancement of	Retention of heritage value; no

Policy Source	Requirement	Demonstrated By
Strategy CP58	heritage assets and settings	adverse impact on rural streetscape

In conclusion, the proposals **accord with national and local policy objectives**, preserving the heritage value of Turnpike Cottage and contributing to the continuity of Charlton's historic built environment without detriment to local distinctiveness or architectural character.

9. Design Justification

The design of the proposed works at **Turnpike Cottage** has been carefully considered to ensure that the development **respects the character, significance, and setting of the existing building**, and aligns with the principles of both national and local planning policy. The rationale is set out below:

9.1 Form and Scale

- The proposed works retain the **existing cottage form**, including roof pitch, ridge height, and overall footprint where possible.
 - Any extensions or alterations are **subordinate in scale**, ensuring they do not dominate or overwhelm the original structure.
 - The proportion and massing of the building are consistent with **other vernacular cottages in Charlton**, maintaining the human scale characteristic of the village streetscape.
 - Rooflines, eaves, and window proportions are designed to **mirror the traditional vernacular rhythm**, preserving the cottage's visual hierarchy and relationship with neighbouring properties.
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9.2 Materials

- Proposed external finishes are selected to make the extension distinct and clearly show the original house and what is the proposal. including:
 - **Stone or render walls** to reflect local vernacular construction
 - **Clay tile or slate roofing** consistent with traditional roofs in the area
 - **Timber windows and doors** with appropriate proportions and detailing
 - Material choices ensure **visual cohesion** with the existing structure and wider village context, while being durable and in keeping with the character of heritage assets in Charlton.
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9.3 Integration with Streetscape

- The cottage maintains its **alignment with the street frontage** and preserves the traditional spatial relationship with adjacent properties.

- Any new elements are designed to be **subordinate and unobtrusive**, avoiding disruption to the established pattern of openings, rooflines, and building gaps typical of the historic village.
 - The proposal **respects sightlines and views** from the road, ensuring the building continues to contribute positively to the village streetscape.
 - Boundary treatments, where required, use traditional materials to integrate seamlessly with the historic character of the streetscape.
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9.4 Respect for Historic Context

- The proposals have been informed by a **detailed understanding of the cottage's heritage significance** and the historical development of Charlton.
 - Key elements of the original building, including roof form, window arrangements, and wall materials, are **retained and reflected in any new works**.
 - Changes are **reversible where possible**, ensuring minimal impact on historic fabric and allowing the building's heritage value to be preserved for future generations.
 - The design approach prioritises **conservation-led adaptation**, maintaining the cottage's vernacular character and its association with historic turnpike routes.
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Summary

The design rationale demonstrates that the proposed works are:

- **Sympathetic to the existing building** in form, scale, and materials
- **Integrative with the historic streetscape** of Charlton
- **Respectful of the cottage's heritage context** and local vernacular architecture

As such, the proposals are considered to **enhance and conserve the historic and visual character** of Turnpike Cottage and its setting, fully supporting compliance with **NPPF Section 16** and **Wiltshire Core Strategy policies CP57 and CP58**.

10. Conclusion

The proposed works at **Turnpike Cottage, Charlton** have been carefully designed to ensure that the development is **sympathetic to the character and significance of the building** and its wider historic environment.

Key points are:

- The proposals **preserve the heritage significance** of the cottage by retaining its **traditional form, scale, materials, and detailing**, ensuring no harm to its character or contribution to the village streetscape.

- The design is fully **integrated with the streetscape** and respects the **historic context of Charlton**, including its historic association with turnpike routes and vernacular settlement patterns.
- The proposals **comply with national and local planning policy**, including:
 - **NPPF Section 16** – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
 - **Wiltshire Core Strategy CP57 & CP58** – Design quality and protection of the historic environment

In conclusion, the proposed development is **conservation-led, proportionate, and appropriate** in scale and character. It will **preserve the heritage asset**, maintain the integrity of the surrounding streetscape, and contribute positively to the continued **historic and visual character of Charlton**.

Accordingly, the proposals are **considered suitable for approval** and consistent with the principles of sustainable and heritage-sensitive development.