

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

23 April 2026

Jocelyn Sage
Senior Conservation Officer
Wiltshire Council Conservation
(South/West)

Officer's Name: Julie Mitchell
Officer's Title: Senior Planning Officer

Application No: **PL/2026/01995 LBC and PL/2026/01607 PP**

Eastleigh Court, Bishopstrow, Warminster, BA12 9HW

Change of use of Eastleigh Court from offices to short-stay accommodation; repair, restoration and enhancement of Eastleigh Court including demolition of existing single storey extension and construction of replacement single storey extension; exterior alterations and repairs; roof repairs; installation of new dormers and replacement rooflights; change of use of the former Eastleigh Court Stables from a dwelling to short-stay accommodation; erection of ancillary building for use as an event space and pool house; new swimming pool, demolition of an outbuilding; landscaping; vehicle parking, new electricity substation; installation of new automatic gates to north and south entrances and associated works.

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

Recommendations:

☐	No comment
☐	Support in principle subject to amendments to the scheme (as set out below)
☒	Support subject to conditions (as set out below)
☐	Object (for reasons set out below)
☐	No objections

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

Policy:

From the point of view of the historic environment the main statutory tests are set out within the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Sections 16 (LBC) and 66 (PP) require that **special regard** be given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing listed buildings, their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 also requires the Council to pay **special attention** to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of designated Conservation Areas.

The NPPF outlines government policy, including its policy in respect of the historic environment. Section 16 of the NPPF 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the Government's high-level policies concerning heritage and sustainable development. Paragraphs 214-16 of the NPPF require a

balanced approach with any harm which would be caused being weighed against the potential public benefits which might be achieved. Paragraph 210 requires local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

National Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on interpreting the NPPF.

The Council's Core Strategy Policy CP58 'Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment' requires that "designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner appropriate to their significance."

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.

Historic England Advice Note 2 – Making changes to Heritage Assets illustrates the application of policies set out in the NPPF in determining applications for PP and LBC.

The following points are taken from the Historic England document "The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 3" (HE GPA3) that are considered to be particularly relevant:

HE GPA3 Part 1:

"The NPPF makes it clear that the setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset."

"The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. ...views of or from an asset will play an important part..."

"While setting can be mapped in the context of an individual application or proposal, it cannot be definitively and permanently described for all time as a spatially bounded area or as lying within a set distance of a heritage asset. This is because the surroundings of a heritage asset will change over time."

"The importance lies in what the setting contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance."

Site and assets considered:

Eastleigh Court is a grade II listed building. The list entry, for identification purposes, reads as follows:

'Detached house. Circa 1880. Flemish and English bond brick, tiled roof, grouped octagonal brick stacks. L-plan. C17 style. Two- storey, 5-windowed front; mullioned windows. Projecting porch to left of centre with Tudor-arched double doors with ornamental hinges, side lights, to either side is 3-light stone mullioned and transomed window to ground and first floor, over door is 5-light oriel on carved stone brackets, attic gables have 2-light ovolo- mullioned windows, saddleback coped verges. Range to right has two 3-light mullioned windows to ground and first floors. Left return has half octagonal 2-storey bay with cross windows to right, cross windows to centre and to left a projecting range with cross windows and 2-light mullioned window to attic gable. Right return has 4-light mullioned and transomed window with king mullion and cross window to first floor, 2-light mullioned window to attic. Rear has wooden cross windows in chamfered brick surrounds, wooden square bay to centre, lead rainwater heads and downpipes. Interior not accessible at time of survey (April 1985). An unaltered gentleman's residence, with good detail. Probably a rebuild of a house built on same site in 1830s, by Astley family. (VCH. Wiltshire, Vol 8, 1965, p.6).'

The house and stables are set well back from the road.

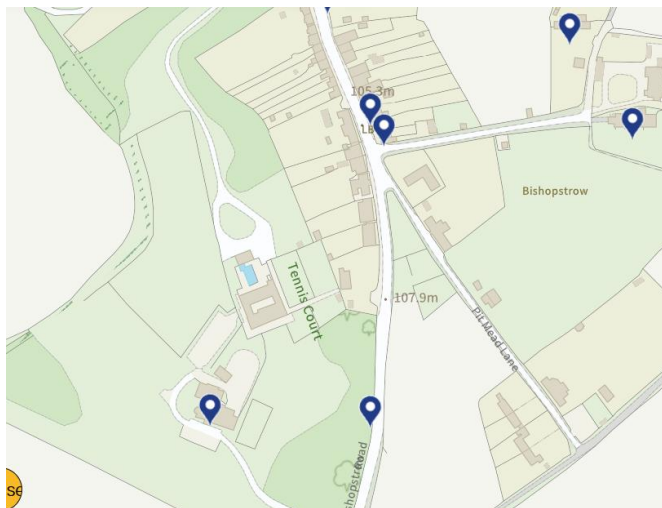


Buildings/structures in the curtilage of a listed building that were ancillary in use to the main building, and which pre-date July 1948 and were in the same ownership at the time of listing of the main building, can be considered curtilage listed. I believe I raised this previously (see pre-application enquiry) and was informed that the stables had never been treated as 'curtilage listed'.

To note that the wall and gate piers surrounding the site are also deemed to be 'curtilage listed'.

There is a listed boundary post on the western side of the road near to the site.

The house and grounds are also within the Bishopstrow conservation area.



Relevant planning history:

ENQ/2025/00809

My colleague, Maureen Pearce provided initial comments. I then took back the area, provided a second set of comments and visited the site. I understand that it was the subject of local consultation.

This scheme was a more 'ambitious' one than is now being proposed.

Issues: impact on the listed building, impact on the conservation area.

Information considered/provided:

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, whilst the applications are accompanied by a "Heritage Impact Assessment" (Portico Heritage) dated February 2026 which is comprehensive and as such provides sufficient information to understand the impact of the proposals and is proportionate to their scope. The requirements of the NPPF are therefore met in this respect.

Whilst paragraph 208 allows for the local planning authority to make its own assessment of impact, I do not disagree with Portico's assessment of the significance of the house/estate as set out in chapter 3 of their report. In particular, their summary (3.27-3.30):

- 3.27 *Eastleigh Court and its grounds have elements of special interest which derive from the remaining architectural quality, detailing and plan form of the historic house, and also its landscape setting and the sense of a gentleman's residence of the 19th century.*
- 3.28 *However, whilst on a superficial level Eastleigh Court feels intact, in reality there have been myriad changes, alterations, additions and demolitions which have fundamentally changed the house and its parkland.*
- 3.29 *Some of those changes have been so fundamental that they have changed the whole concept of the house, others benign and some of the more recent interventions less successful- in this regard the flat roofed extension, former garage intervention and the conversion of the stable block (although not listed). Alterations to the landscape have also changed the original 19th century concept but the house still sits comfortably and attractively within its setting.*

3.30 *This extent of change provides opportunity for restoration, enhancement and sensitive intervention.*

Proposals and assessment

There are 10 Parts to the Design and Access statement. They cover particular areas (which I have labelled in the LBC application):

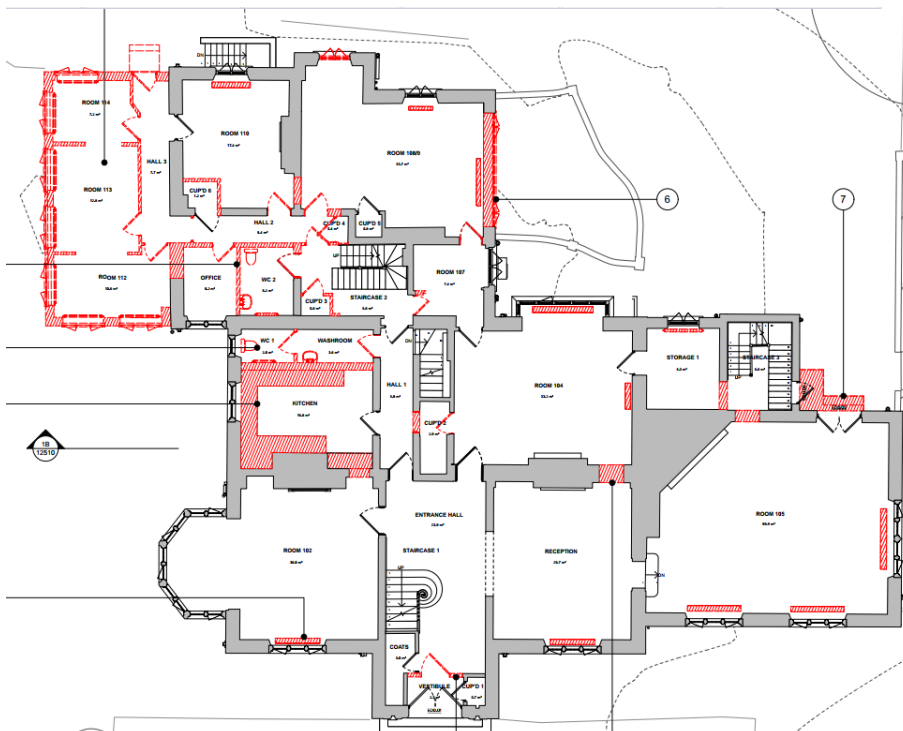
D&A Part 1

- 1 Executive summary, background, basic information (for me: including historic phasing plan), summary of preapplication discussions and community consultation
- 2 Site masterplan, use scenarios and includes CGI of 3 key views of house (as proposed)
- 3 Access and vehicle parking and waste strategy
- 4 Proposal – covers the internal changes to the house
- 5 Design evolution for the new extension to the house
- 6 The Pavilion
- 7 Landscaping and biodiversity
- 8 Sustainability
- 9 Acoustics
- 10 Design Team

The house (Eastleigh Court)

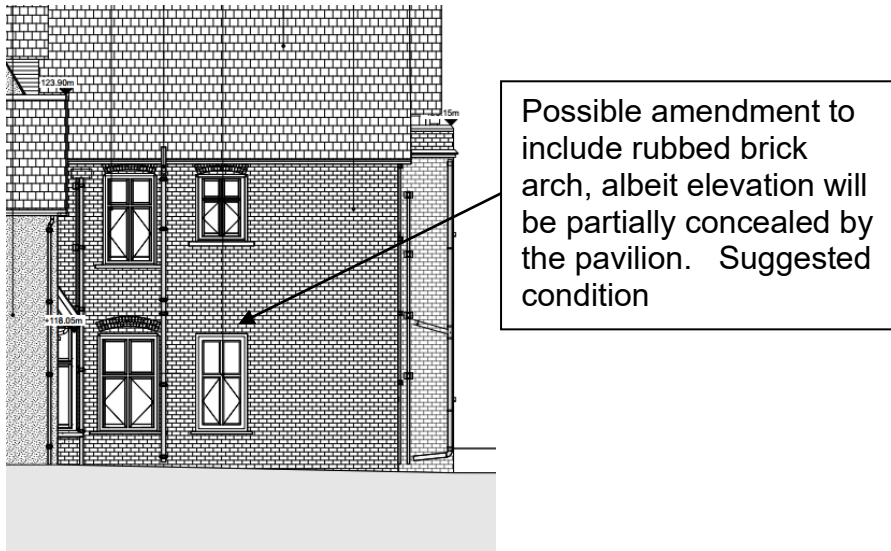
Internal changes to the floorplan

The most significant changes are in respect of the ground floor.



In respect of access to the new extension, two of the smaller service rooms (currently office and WC2) are opened up to form a wider corridor into the proposed new extension, however, room 110 is retained which had more of its original character surviving. This change (from the pre-application enquiry) is welcomed.

The high level strip window in the kitchen is removed (this is welcomed) and replaced with a single window to match the adjacent (windows 1.16), however, they don't show a rubbed brick arch. Wonder if this could be amended?



A new rear entrance way is created through the original kitchen (room 108/9) which makes sense (accessing the new wider corridor (Hall 2) and the servants staircase is retained. The existing kitchen is opened up to its original proportions through the removal of the WC and washroom and a doorway (unlikely to be original) is blocked. Radiators are removed and presumably replaced with ASHP compliant ones. The other significant element of work is the modification of the entrance vestibule – for which there is a separate drawing (plan and elevation E_202 PL1). Essentially the change is to replace an existing large single leaf inner door with a pair of double doors $\frac{3}{4}$ glazed.

First floor changes: very few are proposed and are largely the reversal of previous recent works.

Second floor changes: this is the floor that has the greatest degree of change. A number of partitions are removed or modified at this level in order to form adequate accommodation with en-suites. There is also the formation of the dormers to provide better light/atmosphere to the rooms. The staircases remain unaltered.

Roof plan – the proposal is to replace the existing Velux windows and replace some of those rooflights with new dormers (4 in total). Dormer details have been provided. The concrete rooftiles that line the inner roof slopes will also be replaced with clay tiles.

Main house elevations

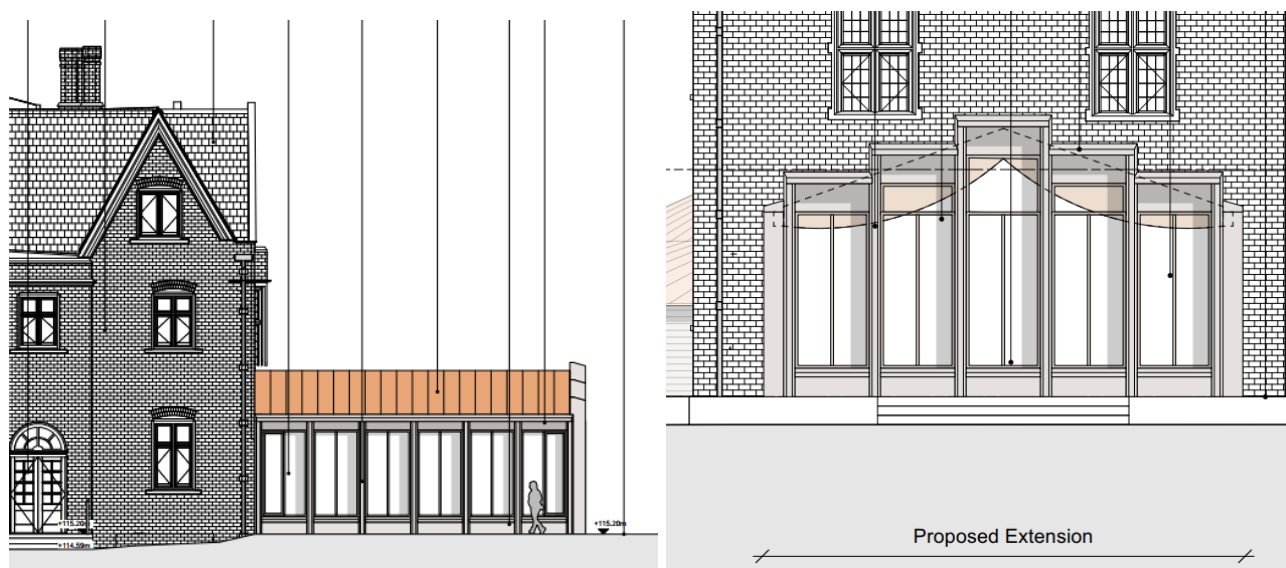
There are few changes aside from the demolition of the existing single-storey extension and its replacement, some new rooflights and replaced RLs (with conservation style) as well as changes to the former kitchen elevation (see previously in respect of new window insertion). CGIs are provided within the D&A statement part 2.

New extension to Eastleigh Court (northern side)

Demolition of the single-storey extension on the eastern side of the main house and replacement with a single-storey rectangular structure. The new extension would sit on a new raised terrace with steps to the garden. It would have largely glazed elevations, a standing seam copper pitched roof, limestone detailing (cills and lintels and columns) and steel framed windows/doors. The gable end would have a stepped

framed arrangement with a combination of stone columns and lintels. It would be clearly contemporary addition to the existing house.

In terms of the footprint, there would be two means of access from the house. The larger of the openings would require some demolition of the original wall (existing office).



The existing extension (built in the 1990s for the National Trust) is not of special interest. There is no objection to its demolition. Consent has previously (and relatively recently) been granted for its demolition and replacement with a substantial extension.

The proposed replacement structure utilises existing openings and as such there is no loss of historic fabric. The copper roof echoes that of the proposed pavilion building. The materials are of a high-quality nature.

In respect of the proposed demolition, it is regrettable that some of the wall of the original house (c1884) is removed to create a larger opening. The HIA says at 4.15:

Changes to this part of the house have been kept to a minimum but are necessary to provide necessary facilities that link the proposed new ground floor extension to the house and create rooms that functionally support the use of the house for modern accommodation. Nevertheless this will lead to a minor loss of plan form.

New free-standing pavilion building

The proposed pavilion building is set behind the new swimming pool close to the house. It is single storey with an irregular footprint. The materials are a limestone wall, standing seam copper roof and a stone chimney. It has minimal openings which are full length and glazed.



New swimming pool and plunge pool? south of the house

The swimming pool is set flush with the ground. The landscaping plan shows stone flags and a hedge enclosing the space.



Stables

'change of use of the former Eastleigh Court Stables from a dwelling to short-stay accommodation'

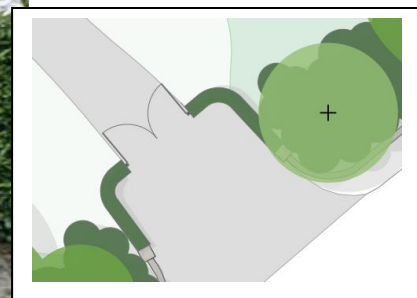
The issue is whether the proposals maintain the setting of Eastleigh Court.

There appear to be no external changes and as such, this is only a change of use ie there is already a swimming pool, swimming pool building and tennis court. The roof plan is also unchanged.

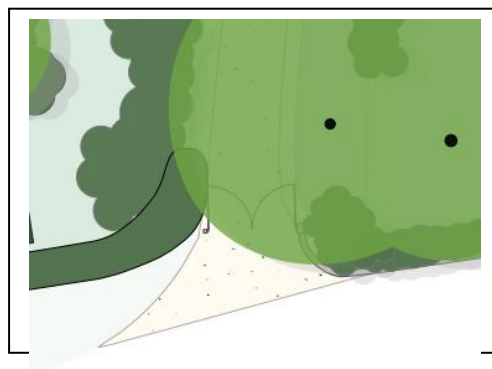
Two sets of new entrance gates – southern and northern entrances

Decorative metal paired automatic gates.

Northern set (current entrance to The Stables) are shown as flanked by hedging, although there are some stone piers closer to the road. The proposal appears to be to set the gates further back in the site and with flanking hedges on either side.



Southern opening has hedging on one side and an existing stone pier (matching those of the northern stables entrance). The proposal is to retain the existing arrangement ie hedging on one side, and new metal gatepost abutting the stone pier with the service box fixed to the stone pier.



Landscaping (soft and hard)

New paths, additional trees, feature areas are proposed, including a new section of 'parapet' wall which is south of the new pavilion (screening the house and pool from the access drive).

The proposal for considerably more planting is welcomed.

In respect of the proposed turning circle in front of the house, this will open up the principal elevation and enhance its setting.

New 'parterres' (perhaps not the right word) are created formed with hedging and with statues/ornaments. There is an existing bird bath adjacent to the house (where the new swimming pool is located), hopefully this is relocated to one of these areas.

Summary & conclusion:

The NPPF confirms that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). It makes clear that any harm to a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification.

In this case the proposals will also result in considerable heritage benefits by virtue of the proposed investment in repair and a new use for the building which is currently unoccupied. The reversion to a residential unit is also welcomed in so far as Eastleigh Court was built as a smart residence.

Overall the proposals have a positive/neutral impact on the building fabric and setting. Where there are changes (including demolitions) the proposals are well-informed and limited in terms of their impact on fabric of significance, the changes being largely to undo previous less-sensitive alterations. As such, the proposals are in accordance with sections 16 and 66 of the Planning LBCA Act 1990, as well as chapter 16 of the NPPF and core policies 57 (design) and 58 (heritage).

In respect of the Bishopstrow Conservation Area, the proposals for increased planting, the retention of the stone wall alongside the road, and the installation of traditional-looking metal gates, would preserve the character of this part of the conservation area. As such the proposals are in accordance with Section 72 of the Planning LBCA Act 1990.

Suggested conditions (LBC) if you are minded to approve the applications

Stone for new parapet wall and coping (alongside drive) to be approved;
Materials schedule for both the house extension and the new pavilion (pre-commencement);
Stone choice for stone paving around house (doesn't need to be pre-commencement);
New fencing to be estate-style fencing (details provided);
New rainwater goods to be metal;
Floor schedule for house – timber floorboards to be retained and repaired unless otherwise agreed (not pre-commencement);
New rooflights – approval of (brochure details suffice);
Any concrete rooftiles to be replaced with matching (to original rooftiles) clay tiles;
New window 1.16 (proposed west elevation) to have a rubbed brick arch to match other windows.