

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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Application No: PL/2026/02443
Erection of 47 dwellings with associated access, internal roads, parking, public open space, landscaping, drainage and associated infrastructure.
LAND AT WHITE STREET, WEST LAVINGTON, DEVIZES, SN10 4JD

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

Recommendations:

☐	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 test is set out within the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66 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 214-216 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." 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.

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.

Site and assets considered: The land affects the setting of a number of listed buildings including All Saints Church and the Church of St Mary; the land also is located immediately adjacent to the western boundary of West Lavington & Littleton Panell Conservation Area.

Proposal: The proposal seeks the erection of up to 47no. dwellings and associated works.

Relevant planning history: ENQ/2025/00848 - Erection of up to 47no. dwellings and associated works

Issues: impact on the setting of neighbouring listed building, impact on the character and appearance of 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, the application is accompanied by a "Heritage Statement" which 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.

However, paragraph 208 also provides for the local planning authority to make its own assessment of impact and the following heritage recommendations are offered on this basis.

Significance of assets and contribution of setting: The NPPF defines significance as the "value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be **archaeological**, **architectural**, **artistic** or **historic**. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting." Historic England assesses significance in a similar manner, referring to evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal values of a place.

In this case the significance of the buildings affected by this proposal lies largely with their historic fabric and architecture - form, layout and architectural expression/detailing and use of high-quality design materials which have significant aesthetic and architectural interest, and which contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The significance of the conservation is primarily derived from its character and appearance, and architectural and historic interest. The landscape setting of the area contributes positively to its significance. The site is considered to form part of the setting of the conservation area. It forms part of an identified view from the western boundary of the conservation area, which provides an appreciation of the rural setting of the settlement. This is a positive aspect of the setting of the conservation area.

Assessment: The conservation area covers the historic cores of Littleton Panell to the north and West Lavington in the southern part of the area. The conservation area covers an area of approximately 37 hectares and contains 36 listed buildings. Most are grade II listed, with the exception of the Church of All Saints (grade I) and Dial House (grade II*). The site is located immediately to the west of the conservation area.

The proposed development comprises a residential development comprising 47 dwellings with associated public open space, access and infrastructure.

The significance of the conservation area is primarily derived from its character and appearance, and architectural and historic interest. The landscape setting of the area also contributes positively to its significance. The conservation area appraisal provides a fairly detailed assessment of the landscape setting of the area. The appraisal notes a number of key views to and from the conservation area, that are considered to be a key part of its significance and setting. The site is part of an identified view from the western boundary of the conservation area towards the landscape to the south. Also noted in the appraisal is the views from Strawberry Hill, which is located to the south west of the site. The view from Strawberry Hill provides some appreciation of the character and appearance of the conservation area, mostly through views of the roofs of buildings, and of the church of All Saints.

Therefore, the site is considered to form part of the setting of the conservation area and provides an appreciation of the rural setting of the settlement. This is a positive aspect of the setting of the conservation area. The hedge that forms the western boundary of the site is the most visible feature within views from Strawberry Hill and is consistent with the rural context of the view.

The layout is largely well considered and responds positively to the setting of the heritage assets. The open space within the proposed layout has been designed to retain the key view from the conservation area towards Strawberry Hill. The proposed development would also retain the planting along the southern boundary of the site and would keep the opening for vehicular access modest and recessive in views. This would help protect the character of the approach to the listed archway along White Street. By retaining the view towards Strawberry Hill the connection of the conservation area to the wider rural setting would remain legible.

The building heights of the proposed scheme have also been largely well considered to ensure that the proposed development would not intrude into the experience provided from within the High Street. Also, the materials for the roofs of the proposed development has been carefully considered to ensure they sit sympathetically with the existing roofscape visible in longer views from Strawberry Hill.

The proposed development would not affect the immediate setting of the churches. The only change would be a small addition to the wider landscape in views of the church spires from Strawberry Hill. This small change would not result in any harm or loss of significance to the churches; this would equate to a negligible effect.

Regarding the listed buildings 30, 52, 63 and 65, and 69 High Street, Home Farmhouse and West Lavington Manor, the proposal development would be screened from the setting of these buildings by the existing intervening buildings and vegetation. This, combined with the well-considered storey heights would ensure that their settings along the High Street would not be affected.

The proposed development would result in a change to the approach to the Arched Gateway in Garden Wall, south of Lavington Manor along White Street. The access would create an opening in the hedge; this opening would be minor in length and planting would be retained on either side of the access. No new dwellings would front onto White Street and the southern boundary of the study site would continue to frame views of the archway. As such the proposed development would slightly change the setting of the archway, but this change would not affect its significance and would have a negligible effect.

Regarding building materials, these appear somewhat unduly dominated by brick whereas the buildings in the village have a far greater mix of materials including painted brickwork and flat painted render. This would help to add greater variety.

No boundary treatment plan seems to have been included and it would be helpful to better understand the relationship between boundary, house type and streetscene. Low brick walls are prevalent, occasional with hedgerows reinforcing the sense of enclosure. Some houses are also located near the back edge of pavement with a margin of privacy paving.

It would also be helpful to breakup the extent of black top surfacing of the highway with an alternative surfacing material. Having the paving in a natural hogging colour surface dressing is supported; this could be used conjunction with stone kerbing or Marshalls conservation kerb to give a more traditional appearance to the public realm.

It is noticeable that no street trees are shown in the layout and street trees are a NPPF requirement in all new streets.

I do however add that cranked building types are not considered acceptable as currently shown at the gateway to the scheme. I also do not consider that pyramid roof forms are typical of the local vernacular. Given the sensitivities of the site, I would recommend Design Review.

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 conclusion, this proposal would slightly change the setting of the West Lavington and Littleton Panell conservation area, the churches of St Mary and of All Saints, and the archway on the High Street. However, the cranked building that forms the gateway to the site (plot 47) is not typical of the local traditional building forms, and neither are the pyramid roof roofs. There also need clarification of boundary treatments and landscape treatment.