



5 Grove Road, Sherston, Malmesbury, SN16 0NF

Heritage Impact Assessment

24 April 2026

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Non-Technical Summary

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared by Heritage Planning Services Ltd on behalf of the applicant in support of planning application PL/2025/06413 for the development of land at 5 Grove Road, Sherston. The Assessment is concerned exclusively with standing heritage. The archaeological potential of the Project Site does not form part of this report.

The Project Site lies within the Sherston Conservation Area. It is not itself a designated heritage asset, nor does it contain one. Three Grade II listed buildings on the east side of the High Street, Draper's Rest at 18 and 20 High Street, No. 22 High Street and The Pines at 16 High Street adjoin or lie in close proximity to the western (rear) boundary of the Project Site and have therefore been considered within its setting. No Grade I or Grade II* listed buildings, Registered Parks or Gardens, Registered Battlefields or Scheduled Monuments lie within a meaningful zone of visual or spatial relationship with the Site. A small number of non-designated heritage assets have been identified within the Site itself, including historic boundary walls and a 19th century outbuilding.

The proposed development comprises new residential dwellings, together with the demolition of the 19th century outbuilding and the careful dismantling and partial reinstatement of historic boundary walling on its established alignment. The stone from the walling will be retained and reused, and the dismantled sections rebuilt to match.

The Assessment finds that the proposal will not harm the significance of any of the three adjoining Grade II listed buildings. Their primary frontages and principal views face the High Street; the Project Site lies to their rear and has no meaningful role in their setting beyond immediate boundary enclosure, which is preserved. The Assessment further concludes that the proposal preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the Sherston Conservation Area, through the removal of a low-value 20th century feature, the reinstatement of a more appropriate frontage to Grove Road, and the retention and reuse of historic walling on its correct line.

A measure of modest and locally-scaled harm arises through the loss of the 19th century outbuilding and the partial intervention to the boundary walls. This harm is modest and is capable of mitigation through the recording, salvage and reuse proposed. Weighed against the public benefits of the scheme, the delivery of new housing in a sustainable village location, the tidying of an under-used backland site, the removal of unsympathetic later accretions and the conservation of genuine historic fabric through reuse, the Assessment concludes that the statutory heritage tests under sections 66 and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the

heritage balance under the National Planning Policy Framework are met. The scheme is therefore considered acceptable in heritage terms.

1. Introduction

1.1. Heritage Planning Services has been commissioned to prepare a Heritage Impact Assessment for land belonging to 5 Grove Road, Sherston, Malmesbury, SN16 0NF (the Project Site).

1.2. This report has been commissioned in response to the consultation of the Senior Conservation Officer (Consultant) at Wiltshire Council, Fiona Webb, dated 8 August 2025, in respect of planning application PL/2025/06413. The Conservation Officer offered a "Comment" recommendation, neither objecting to nor supporting the scheme. Her observations were twofold.

1.3. First, Webb considered that the Planning and Heritage Statement submitted with the application "provides limited information about the buildings and fails to provide any objective assessment of the fabric affected, its date or significance or of the impact of the proposals" and, as a result, "fails to meet the requirements of the NPPF" (paragraph 207). In particular, she drew attention to evidence on the First Edition Ordnance Survey that historic buildings had formerly occupied the site of the existing workshops, and requested that this information be supplied.

1.4. Second, in relation to detailing, she requested a series of design amendments: natural stone to the main elevations and cills (in place of the reconstituted stone currently proposed); natural stone tile or natural slate roofs (in place of reconstituted slates); stone chimneys (in place of brick); and stone boundary walls (in place of 2m close-boarded fencing), together with a plan showing the proposed boundary treatments.

1.5. The Conservation Officer also recorded that the host building is "modern and has no architectural or historic merit" and that the Sherston Conservation Area Character Appraisal "confirms that this part of the Conservation Area has potential for infill development", observations which, whilst not amounting to support for the scheme in principle, acknowledge both the undistinguished character of the existing building and the Appraisal's positive assessment of the area's capacity to accept sympathetic infill.

1.6. This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared to address the Conservation Officer's request for further information and to provide the objective assessment of the significance of the affected heritage assets, and of the impact of the proposals on that significance, required by paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

1.7. This Assessment is concerned exclusively with standing heritage — the Conservation Area, the designated and non-designated buildings and structures in the vicinity of the Project Site, and

the surviving historic fabric within the curtilage of the Site itself. The archaeological potential of the Project Site, and any mitigation that might properly arise from below-ground works, is not assessed within this report. Sherston is identified by the Sherston Conservation Area Statement as an Area of Special Archaeological Significance (ASAS), and the Project Site's position within the medieval burghal layout of the settlement is such that archaeological deposits may survive beneath the existing yard surface. Separate archaeological advice should be sought if required by the Local Planning Authority.

1.8. The report has been completed by Sam Driscoll, MCIfA, under Project Code HPS718/26.

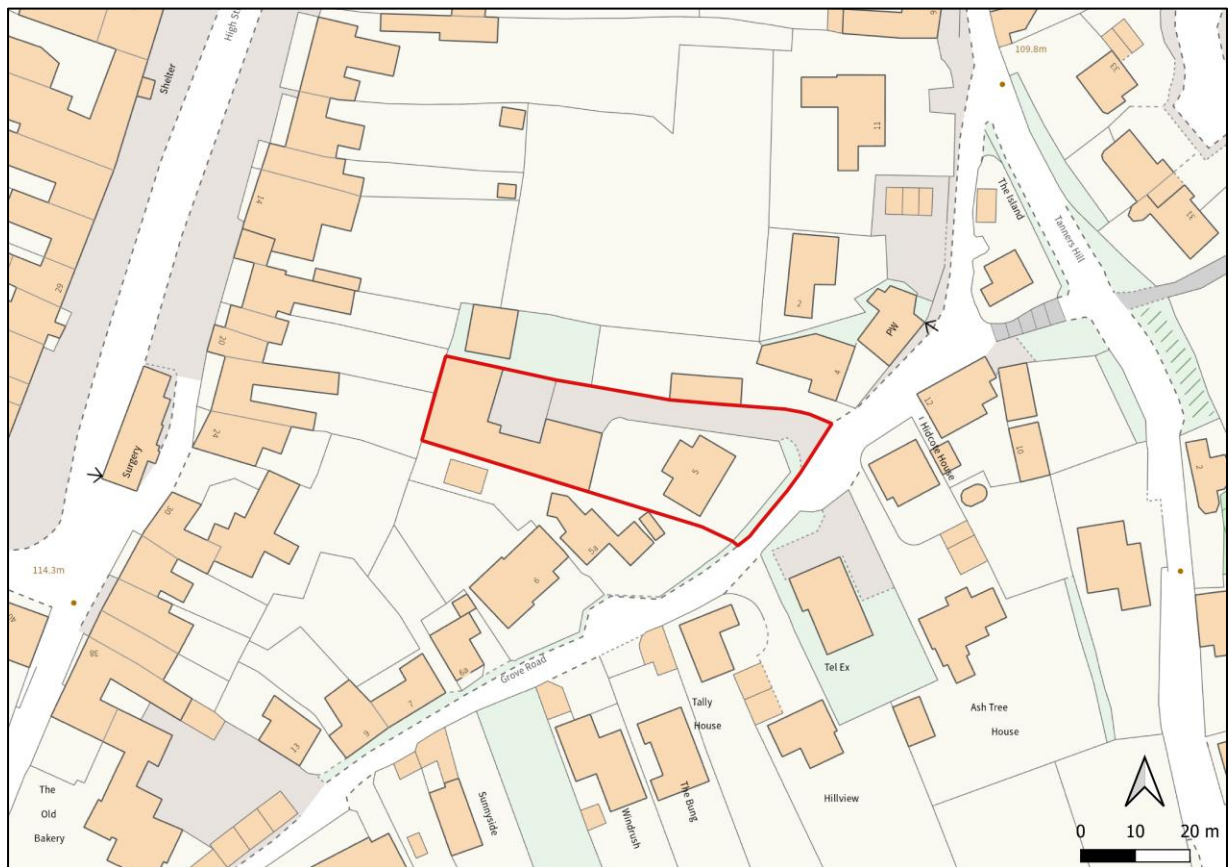


Figure 1 Detailed Project Site location outlined in red. Centred on ST 85388 85783



Figure 2 General Project Site location outlined in red. Centred on ST 85388 85783.

The Project Site

1.9. The Project Site is located at 5 Grove Road, Sherston, Malmesbury, Wiltshire, SN16 0NF (national grid reference ST 85388 85783). It comprises a plot of approximately 0.13 hectares, occupying a back lane position on the west side of Grove Road within the built-up area of the village.



Photo 1 Southwest facing view of No. 5 Grove Road with access to the rear builders yard to the right.

1.10. The Project Site is presently occupied by a detached chalet-style bungalow of 1960s date at its eastern (Grove Road) end, which remains in use as a single dwelling, and by a builders' yard with associated outbuildings which occupies the western (rear) part of the Site. The bungalow is accessed directly from Grove Road, and the builders' yard to the rear is accessed via a private lane running east-west along the northern boundary of the Project Site.



Photo 2 Northwest facing view of modern units within the builders yard to the rear of the site. North boundary wall visible to the right- indicated by the blue arrow.

1.11. The Project Site lies within Sherston Conservation Area, first designated in 1973, within the defined settlement boundary of Sherston as shown on the Wiltshire Core Strategy Policies Map, and within the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). The designated heritage assets within the wider setting of the Project Site, together with the Conservation Area itself, are considered in Sections 3 and 4 below.

1.12. The Project Site is broadly level internally, but lies within an area of sloping topography, falling broadly north to south, toward the River Avon. The topographic survey commissioned for the scheme (D & H Surveys Ltd, January 2024) records the Project Site centre at approximately 114.52m aOD. Ground levels rise toward High Street, resulting in the rear gardens of listed properties sharing a west boundary with the plot being significantly higher. The rear of Nos. 18–20 High Street lie at approximately 116.38m aOD and the rear of No. 22 High Street lies at approximately 115.87m aOD. No. 16 High Street to the northwest of the Project Site stands at approximately 115.82m aOD. No intervisibility between the Project Site and the rear elevations of listed buildings to the west was observed at the time of the site visit (April 2026); the terraced Project Site and consequent level difference precludes direct views between the buildings.

1.13. The external boundaries of the Project Site remain closely coincident with those recorded on the Sherston tithe map of 1839, and historic fabric survives along the majority of those

alignments. The south boundary wall is incorporated into, and now forms the internal south wall of the workshop units; it is a coursed Cotswold limestone rubble wall, whitewashed, standing to full eaves height internally.

1.14. The south wall forms a part of the 19th-century standing stone workshop building to the south-west, presently in use as a joiner's workshop. The building has walls of whitewashed coursed Cotswold limestone rubble standing to full eaves height. A surviving high-level window opening is preserved in the north wall and a large floor to ceiling infilled aperture is also evident in the north elevation. The roof of the workshop is a modern timber-truss structure of mid-20th-century (c.1960s) date with inserted rooflights, and is not of heritage interest.

1.15. The north boundary wall, running along the access lane between the Project Site and No. 4 Grove Road to the north, survives as a coursed Cotswold limestone rubble wall with degraded concrete capping. The east portion fronting the access drive from Grove Road has been largely rebuilt but preserves the historic alignment and retains a significant quantity of historic material.

1.16. The boundary wall separating the existing bungalow at No. 5 Grove Road from the remainder the Project Site access track is a drystone rubble wall of Cotswold limestone of probable 19th century date, terminating at its eastern end in a modern dressed ashlar gate pier. The wall is finished with a modern concrete cap, which survives in places.

1.17. The western (rear) boundary wall was inaccessible at the time of the site visit owing to stored material within the sheds. This wall may retain historic fabric (pending confirmation).

1.18. The boundary walls and the standing 19th century workshop building are each assessed as non-designated heritage assets in Section 4 below.

1.19. The existing chalet-style bungalow at No. 5 Grove Road, occupying the eastern (Grove Road) end of the Project Site, is of 1960s date and is of no heritage interest. The builders' yard structures in the western (rear) part of the Project Site comprise a linked range of modern concrete-block and profiled-steel-clad workshop units with corrugated roof coverings, together with a painted steel container (inscribed "E L Palmer Sherston Ltd") and associated modern yard apparatus. Both the bungalow and the yard structures are to be demolished under the Poulson Architectural Design proposals (drawing 334, dated 20 April 2026), which provide for the erection of three new dwellings: Plots 1 and 2 on the footprint of the demolished bungalow at the Grove Road frontage, and Plot 3 within the rear yard. The new dwellings are specified in Cotswold natural stone with natural stone heads and cills, grey slate roof coverings, joinery painted in Conservation green (RAL 6021) and black rainwater goods; boundary treatments comprise 1.8m-high natural stone walls to the front and rear of the dwellings with cock-and-hen wall-head detail. The historic fabric on the Project Site, specifically the south boundary wall within the workshop units, the 19th-

century workshop walls and the north boundary wall along the access lane are to be retained under the proposals. The boundary wall separating the Project Site from No. 5 Grove Road is to be removed and rebuilt in a similar style.

2. Conservation Area

Designation and extent

2.1. The Sherston Conservation Area was first designated by North Wiltshire District Council in 1973 under section 277 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971. The Area was reviewed in 1992 and formally extended in November 1996. A detailed character appraisal, the *Sherston Conservation Area Statement* ("the CA Statement"), was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by North Wiltshire District Council in January 1997 and published in April 1999. The CA Statement remains the principal evidence base for the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and is therefore the foundational document for the heritage-planning analysis presented in this Assessment.

2.2. The Conservation Area is focused on the linear historic core of the village along the High Street, with additional extents along Cliff Road and Church Street to the south, and along Noble Street, Grove Road and Tanners Hill at the north-eastern edge of the historic settlement. The Project Site lies within the Conservation Area as extended in 1996.

Overlapping designations

2.3. The Project Site falls within three overlapping heritage and landscape designations: The Sherston Conservation Area (designated 1973; extended November 1996); The Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, designated 1966 and extended in 1990; re-branded as a National Landscape in 2023). Sherston lies within the southern part of the National Landscape, which is a statutory landscape designation of equivalent weight for planning purposes; and Sherston is identified by the CA Statement as an Area of Special Archaeological Significance (ASAS), reflecting the village's known medieval plan-form and its potential to retain sub-surface evidence of the historic settlement.

2.4. These overlapping designations mean that change within the Project Site must respond not only to the character of the Conservation Area but also to the wider Cotswolds landscape setting within which the Conservation Area sits.

Character, plan form and townscape

2.5. Sherston is a small village of medieval origin, understood in the CA Statement and in wider landscape-history scholarship (B. K. Roberts, *The Making of the English Village*, 1987) as an "agglomeration-type" settlement, an irregular-grid plan-form without a village green, arranged around a wide High Street that served as a market place. Plots along High Street take the form of long, narrow strips running perpendicular to the frontage, corresponding to the medieval burgrave pattern.

2.6. The surviving built character of the historic core reflects tightly-spaced stone vernacular buildings to the frontage, with yards, gardens and outbuildings behind, enclosed and defined by dry stone or coursed rubble boundary walls. The CA Statement identifies "*Rubblestone walls, limewash finish*", "*timber casement or sash windows*", "*stone door heads with brackets*", "*steep stone tiled pitched roofs*", "*dry stone boundary walls, iron railings*" and "*mainly shallow front plots*" as the "*Typical Construction Details for Traditional Sherston Building*" (*Sherston Conservation Area Statement*, 4.3).

Identity Areas — the Site's position within the Conservation Area

2.7. The CA Statement divides the Conservation Area into a number of Identity Areas; discrete sub-character areas, each with its own townscape character and its own guidance. The Project Site falls within the Identity Area covering Noble Street, Grove Road and Tanners Hill at the north-eastern edge of the historic settlement, an area the Statement characterises as more sparsely developed than the High Street core, with greater openness between plots and a more informal relationship between buildings and the public realm.

2.8. The CA Statement further distinguishes between Key Areas, being the most townscape-sensitive parts of the Conservation Area, principally the High Street frontages and other character areas. The Project Site is not within a Key Area; it sits in the more permissive character area for which the Statement offers a suite of positive development opportunities (see 3.5 below).

Specific findings of the CA Statement relevant to the Project Site

2.9. The CA Statement contains a number of findings that speak directly to the Project Site, its frontage, its plot and its context. These findings are summarised here and returned to in the Impact Assessment at Section 10.

2.10. Walls as a defining character element. The CA Statement identifies the dry stone and coursed rubble boundary walls of Sherston as a central component of its character. The Statement

states that *"the relationship between the building and its plot is also of prime importance. Existing boundaries, set-backs, verges and gradients should be respected. The preferred method of forming boundaries is dry stone walling with appropriate copings, avoid cement mortar."*

2.11. The *Walls and Highways* map at page 22 of the Statement identifies Grove Road on its legend as both an Important Highway Space and an Important Footpath. The Project Site's Grove Road frontage is therefore afforded elevated weight in the character of the Conservation Area: its streetscape experience is one that the Statement explicitly values.

2.12. Uniquely among the Conservation Area's streets, Grove Road is named twice in the Statement's design guidance. First, in Part 2 (in the passage on rural backdrop, above). Second, and more pertinently to the Project Site, at Part 4 (*Applying Guidance Recommendations*) in the sub-section on *Design of New Infill Buildings*, where the Statement states: *"In more sparsely developed areas such as Grove Road or Tanners Hill, buildings can be set further back, generally behind dry stone boundary or retaining walls."* This is the Statement's own description of a particular typology of infill on Grove Road: new dwellings set back from the frontage behind retained dry stone boundary walls.

2.13. Part 4 Action Plan Summary. The Statement's Part 4 Action Plan Summary, which tabulates the actions, enhancement schemes and development opportunities appropriate to each Identity Area, marks the Noble Street / Grove Road / Tanners Hill row with asterisks against Redevelopment opportunity, Backland development opportunity and some new uses possible, alongside a preference for natural and alternative materials, encouragement for walls and planting, and enhancement schemes for boundary-wall repair and reinstatement. The Statement also indicates that the Grove Road streetscape is a specific target for enhancement. The Statement further records, at Part 4, the following wider observation which applies directly to the Project Site: *"There are other areas within the current village envelope that may fall under pressure for development, for example land around Grove Road. Any potential development in these areas, especially within the Conservation Area, must be the subject of careful consideration."*

2.14. The CA Statement therefore does not treat sites such as the Project Site as off-limits to change; it identifies them as appropriate for redevelopment, infill and backland development, provided the design is responsive to the Statement's guidance and carried out with *"careful consideration"*.

2.15. The Project Site as presently configured makes a mixed contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area: No. 5 Grove Road (the 1960s chalet bungalow fronting Grove Road) is of a form, material and scale inconsistent with the traditional built character of

Sherston as set out in the CA Statement. It is an example of precisely the "*suburban designs*" against which 4.3 of the Statement cautions, and its Grove Road frontage detracts from the Important Highway Space experience.

2.16. The modern concrete-block yard units to the rear of No. 5 are of no heritage interest and neither positively nor negatively contribute to public views.

2.17. The southern boundary wall of the Project Site, which preserves the 1839 tithe-map boundary line in coursed Cotswold limestone rubble, is a positive character-forming element of the type the Statement identifies; however, it is largely screened from public view by flanking structures.

2.18. The north boundary wall, which runs along the lane and is visible as part of the Grove Road / Noble Street Important Footpath route, is a strongly positive character element, a substantial stretch of the Sherston wall-network with both historic fabric and townscape presence.

2.19. The 19th century building at the rear of the Project Site is a modest but legitimate contributor to the layered character of the rear-plot area.

2.20. The Project Site therefore neither entirely detracts from nor wholly enhances the Conservation Area as currently configured. It presents a specific opportunity to replace a late 20th century frontage that detracts from character, with new build that responds to the Statement's design guidance, while retaining (and, where necessary, rectifying) the historic boundary walls that the Statement identifies as core to Sherston's character.

Relevant planning policy framework

2.21. The statutory and policy framework for the management of change within the Sherston Conservation Area is set out in Section 7 of this Assessment. For the purposes of Section 3 it is sufficient to record that: Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area in the exercise of planning functions;

2.22. NPPF (December 2024) paragraphs 207 and 212–216 set out the national policy framework for the conservation of the historic environment generally and for development affecting Conservation Areas in particular;

2.23. Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) Core Policies CP57 (Ensuring high quality design and place shaping) and CP58 (Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment) provide the local-plan framework for heritage-sensitive development within Wiltshire Council's administrative area;

2.24. The Sherston Neighbourhood Plan (made 2019) sets out additional locally-derived policy for new development in the village; and The Sherston Conservation Area Statement (1999) is the principal Supplementary Planning Guidance for the management of change within the Conservation Area.

3. Designated Heritage Assets

3.1. The Project Site lies within the Sherston Conservation Area, but is not itself within, nor does it contain, any designated heritage asset. Three Grade II listed buildings on the east side of the High Street, Draper's Rest at 18 and 20 High Street, No. 22 High Street, and The Pines at 16 High Street, adjoin or lie in close proximity to the western (rear) boundary of the Project Site and are therefore considered within the setting of the proposed works. No Grade I or Grade II* listed buildings, no Registered Park or Garden, no Registered Battlefield and no Scheduled Monument lie within a meaningful zone of visual or spatial relationship with the Project Site; the assessment of setting impact in Section 10 is therefore confined to the three Grade II buildings identified below, supplemented by consideration of the wider character of the Conservation Area in Section 2. Sources consulted are the National Heritage List for England (NHLE), the Sherston Conservation Area Statement (1999) and the Wiltshire Council interactive planning map. The descriptive text for each listed building below is reproduced, in part, from the NHLE entry.

Draper's Rest, 18 and 20 High Street

3.2. Draper's Rest, 18 and 20 High Street, is a Grade II listed building, first listed on 12 December 1951. It lies approximately 17m to the west of the rear boundary of the Project Site and shares the Project Site's west boundary. The building fronts High Street.

3.3. List Entry Number: [1199768](#)

Row house, formerly 2 cottages. Late C17 (reputed to be dated 1683 on shield now obscured). Render to west front, rubble to rear with gabled stone slate roof and right end stone stack. Rear range parallel to road with 2 projecting wings at right-angles to road, that to right slightly advanced. Two gabled storeys of unequal heights with 1 window each: 3-light C19 casements to No 20, shop window to No 18 and 2-light C19 casement above. Plank door to right of No 18 and the junction of the 2 former cottages. No 20 has Bath Sun Fire plaque above title stone. Interior. No 18 has chamfered beams and large inglenook fireplace.

22 High Street

3.4. No. 22 High Street is a Grade II listed building, first listed on 12 December 1951. It lies approximately 29m to the west of the Project Site and shares the Project Site's west boundary. The building fronts High Street.

3.5. List Entry Number: [1023240](#)

Row house. Mid C18 with C19 alterations. Render with coursed rubble to rear, stone dressings and gabled stone slate roof with end stone stacks with brick caps. U-shaped plan with 2 rear service ranges and through passage. Two-storey, 2-window west front. Windows are C19 sashes with marginal glazing in keyed blocked surrounds. Central doorway with blocked surround: 6-panel door with rectangular fanlight. Interior. Circular newel staircase.



Photo 3 East facing view of principal elevations: grade II listed Nos. 18 & 20 High Street (Gables, left) and No. 22 High Street (Right)

The Pines, 16 High Street

3.6. The Pines, 16 High Street is a Grade II listed building, first listed on 12 December 1951. It lies approximately 33m to the NNW of the Project Site's rear boundary and fronts the High Street.

3.7. List Entry Number: [1356013](#)

Row house. Dated N/P/1691 (on datestone above door). Render to west front, rubble to rear with stone dressings and gabled stone slate roof with end stone stacks with brick caps. L-shaped plan with rear service range. Two-storey, 2-window west front. Windows are C19 sashes with marginal glazing in blocked surrounds. Central doorway with segmental open stone hood on carved brackets and 6-panel door with the top 2 panels glazed. Low stone boundary wall to garden with ashlar gatepiers and C20 stone pine cones: C19 wrought iron railed gate.



Photo 4 East facing view of grade II listed The Pines, No. 16 High Street, principal elevation (left)

4. Non-Designated Heritage Assets

4.1. Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated. The effect of development on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset is, under paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), to be taken into account in a balanced judgement, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset. The non-designated heritage assets identified as being affected by the proposals are considered in turn below.

Former Sherston Methodist Chapel, Grove Road

4.2. The former Sherston Methodist Chapel is located on Grove Road approximately 14m from the north-east gable of the proposed Plot 2. It has been formally identified as a non-designated heritage asset by Wiltshire Council, as recorded under the "Designations/constraints" heading in the Officer Report for planning permission PL/2024/05405, granted 30 March 2025 for the change of use of the Chapel from a former place of worship to a single residential dwelling.

4.3. The Chapel was constructed in 1851 as a Primitive Methodist Chapel, one of two Methodist places of worship then in Sherston. It was built of Cotswold limestone obtained from the nearby Sodbury Quarry, at a recorded construction cost of £180. In 1932 the Primitive Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist congregations in Sherston combined to form the Sherston Methodist Church, which was thereafter based in the Grove Road Chapel. In 1964 a single-storey red-brick extension was added to the building to provide an ancillary lobby, kitchen and WC, and the adjoining cottages then in Methodist ownership (since demolished) were sold. The Chapel ceased to be used by the Methodist Church on 9 April 2022, was sold at auction in February 2024, and consent for its conversion to a single dwelling was granted on 30 March 2025 under PL/2024/05405.

4.4. The Chapel is a two-storey rectangular stone-built building under a pitched slate roof, set gable-end to Grove Road. The principal (north-west) elevation fronts Grove Road and comprises two tall round-arched windows with margin glazing in painted timber frames, set within coursed rubble Cotswold limestone walling with voussoired heads, and a plain memorial tablet set in the wall between the two windows. The building retains its nineteenth-century form and fenestration and makes a strongly legible contribution to the streetscape of Grove Road. The 1964 single-storey red-brick extension to the side and rear is a subservient but visually discordant element, and is the subject of works approved under PL/2024/05405 to re-face it in Cotswold stone.

4.5. The Chapel holds significance as a substantially intact mid-nineteenth-century Primitive Methodist chapel documenting the growth of Nonconformist worship in rural north Wiltshire; as a local social-historical record of the Methodist community in Sherston from 1851 until 2022; and as an intact stone-and-slate Cotswold-vernacular building contributing positively to the character and appearance of the Sherston Conservation Area and the streetscape of Grove Road.



Photo 5 Former Sherston Methodist Chapel, Grove Road southeast elevation, fronting Grove Road.

Cuckoo Cottage, No. 12 Grove Road

4.6. Cuckoo Cottage (12 Grove Road) is a detached traditional Cotswold-vernacular cottage on Grove Road, approximately 22m north-north-east of the roadside access to the Project Site. It is not a statutorily listed building and has not, to our knowledge, been formally identified as a non-designated heritage asset by Wiltshire Council. It is nonetheless considered for the purposes of this assessment to meet the criteria of a non-designated heritage asset by reason of its age, vernacular fabric and positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Sherston Conservation Area.

4.7. The cottage is of two storeys with attic accommodation expressed externally as a front-facing gabled dormer, and is constructed of coursed squared Cotswold limestone with freestone dressings to the window openings, under a pitched stone-tile (limestone slate) roof with plain ridge. The west gable is surmounted by a substantial ashlar chimney stack. Fenestration is by painted timber casements set in stone-mullioned openings with plain stone cills. A subservient single-storey rendered extension with a lean-to slate roof extends to the east.

4.8. The only planning history identified at the cottage is application N/04/02883/FUL, for the erection of two-storey side and rear extensions and alterations, which was consented on 23 November 2004.

4.9. The cottage holds significance as a substantially intact stone-built Cotswold-vernacular cottage of probable eighteenth- or nineteenth-century origin fronting the historic Back Lane (now Grove Road); as a record of traditional Cotswold domestic building materials and detailing – coursed squared limestone, stone-tile roof, ashlar chimney, timber casements in stone mullions – surviving within the Sherston Conservation Area; and as a positive contributor to the streetscape of Grove Road within the medieval burghal layout of Sherston.



Photo 6 Cuckoo Cottage, No. 12 Grove Road northwest facing elevation fronting Grove Road.

Island Cottage, Grove Road

4.10. Island Cottage is a traditional Cotswold-vernacular stone-built cottage on Grove Road, approximately 34m north-north-east of the roadside access to the Project Site. It is not a statutorily listed building and has not, to our knowledge, been formally identified as a non-designated heritage asset by Wiltshire Council. It is nonetheless considered for the purposes of this assessment to form part of the wider historic setting of the Project Site and to contribute positively to the character and appearance of the Sherston Conservation Area by reason of its traditional vernacular form and materials.

4.11. In addition to the three off-site non-designated heritage assets identified above, five discrete on-site components of surviving historic fabric have been identified within the curtilage of

the Project Site, each of which is judged on its merits to meet the criteria of a non-designated heritage asset by reason of its alignment on the Project Site's historic plot boundary as recorded on the Sherston tithe map of 1839 and its surviving, or likely surviving, nineteenth-century fabric. These have been designated for the purposes of this assessment as NDHAs A to E and are considered in turn below. None of the five is recorded by the applicant's Planning and Heritage Statement, which treats the Project Site as wholly modern brownfield.



Photo 7 Northeast facing view from Project Site entrance (left) along Grove Road, towards Island Cottage.

NDHA-A: South Boundary Wall

4.12. The south boundary of the Project Site is formed by a run of coursed Cotswold limestone rubble walling which now stands as the internal south wall of the modern concrete-block yard units erected against it during the later twentieth century. The wall preserves the southern plot boundary of the Project Site as recorded on the Sherston tithe map of 1839 and forms the southern elevation of the 19th century standing building NDHA-B. The wall has been rebuilt and infilled with modern materials in places.

4.13. The south boundary wall holds modest evidential and low - modest historical significance. Its plan alignment is recorded on the 1839 tithe map and corresponds to the present-day southern boundary of the Project Site, thereby preserving the historic plot pattern of the Back Lane (now Grove Road) frontage. Its fabric is a straightforward record of traditional Cotswold rubble

construction. Aesthetic value is limited by its concealment within the modern yard units. Overall significance is assessed as low-to-modest, principally evidential. The wall is to be retained under the current proposals and is not directly affected by the proposed works.



Photo 8 Restricted view of NDHA-A South Boundary Wall, also rear wall of modern workshop, west of site.

NDHA-B: Standing nineteenth-century workshop range

4.14. A standing two-storey-height building occupies the southwestern corner of the Project Site and is presently in use as a joinery workshop. Its south wall is shared with the southern Project Site boundary and, like NDHA-A, is recorded on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map and potentially the 1839 Sherston Tithe Map. The building is to be demolished under the current proposals (see Section 10).

4.15. The walls comprise coursed whitewashed Cotswold limestone rubble standing to full eaves height and a high-level window opening survives in the north elevation. The roof structure is a later twentieth-century (c.1960s) timber-truss replacement with inserted modern rooflights and is not historic; it contributes nothing to the heritage significance of the building and is excluded from the assessment of significance which follows.

4.16. The heritage interest of NDHA-B has historic and evidential value. Aesthetic value is modest: the building has been significantly altered, and is not visible from the public realm, being enclosed by the modern yard units to its east and north and by the burgage plots of High Street

to its west. Overall significance is assessed as modest, local and primarily evidential. Because the historic interest is confined to the walls and is essentially evidential, the significance of NDHA-B is capable of being adequately recorded, understood and archived through Level 2/3 building recording to the Historic England Understanding Historic Buildings (2016) standard, in advance of the proposed works; the impact assessment at Section 10 proceeds on this basis.



Photo 9 West facing view of NDHA-B southeast gable belonging to 19th century stone building, west of site (blue arrow).



Photo 10 WSW facing view of interior of NDHA-B 19th century stone building with floor to ceiling infill evident to the right- indicated with the blue arrow.

NDHA-C: North boundary wall to the access drive

4.17. The northern boundary of the Project Site is formed by a long coursed Cotswold limestone rubble wall running east-west along the access drive from Grove Road. The wall preserves the alignment of the northern Project Site boundary as recorded on the Sherston tithe map of 1839 and is to be retained under the current proposals.

4.18. The west section of the wall survives substantially as historic drystone in coursed Cotswold limestone rubble. The capping, where evident in places along the wall top, is concrete and represents a twentieth-century repair. Upper courses of the drystone coursing have collapsed in sections: as the drystone has settled downwards over time the rigid concrete capping has initially remained in place, leaving a gap between the cap and the settled wall top; the cap has then in turn failed and fallen, exposing a short stretch of broken wall top.

4.19. The east section of the wall, nearer the Grove Road frontage, has been substantially rebuilt. The rebuild retains the historic alignment of the wall and a meaningful proportion of historic material at low level, but the rebuild itself is a vernacular copy rather than original historic fabric.

4.20. NDHA-C retains evidential and modest historical significance as a long-established rural boundary wall defining the north side of the historic access lane from Grove Road and preserving the plot alignment recorded on the 1839 tithe map. Aesthetic value is local: the west-section drystone rubble, with its long-undisturbed character and weathering patina, contributes positively to the predominantly rural and permeable character of Grove Road, although the collapsed upper courses detract from overall legibility; the rebuilt east section, while modern, maintains the vernacular idiom of the conservation area. Overall significance is assessed as modest, local and primarily evidential. The wall is retained in full under the current proposals.



Photo 11 NNE facing view of NDHA-C North Boundary Wall, to the west of site – indicated by red arrow.



Photo 12 Northwest facing view of NDHA-C North Boundary Wall from Grove Road access.

NDHA-D: North boundary wall to 5 Grove Road

4.21. The short run of drystone boundary wall running along the present access drive, between Grove Road and the existing chalet bungalow at No. 5 Grove Road, preserves a historic boundary as recorded on the Sherston tithe map of 1839. This element of the on-site historic fabric is directly affected by the proposed works: the bungalow at No. 5 is to be demolished to make way for Plots 1 and 2, and the wall is to be removed to accommodate access during construction of the new dwellings (see Section 10).

4.22. The wall is a coursed drystone in Cotswold limestone rubble, with modern concrete cap. At its eastern (Grove Road) terminus the wall incorporates a modern dressed ashlar gate pier in Cotswold limestone. Generally the wall is in a poor state of repair, having suffered partial collapse due to the loss of the original capping and ingress of ivy and other vegetation.

4.23. NDHA-D retains modest evidential, modest historical and modest aesthetic significance. Evidential value lies in the tithe-map alignment of the wall. Historical value is local — a record of the historic plot boundary fronting Back Lane (now Grove Road). Aesthetic value lies in the weathered drystone coursing, which contributes positively to the permeable rural streetscape of Grove Road at the Project Site entrance. Overall significance is assessed as modest, principally evidential and locally aesthetic. The impact to NDHA-D is assessed in Section 10 below.



Photo 13 West facing view of NDHA-D north boundary wall of No. 5 Grove Road, with site access to the right.

NDHA-E: West (rear) boundary wall — probable

4.24. The western (WSW) boundary of the Project Site occupies the same alignment as the rear plot boundary recorded on the Sherston tithe map of 1839. The boundary is presently formed by a run of walling concealed internally by the rear of the modern concrete-block yard units and their stored material.

4.25. It was not possible to inspect the rear wall directly at the time of the site visit, the rear sheds being occupied by stored material and not reasonably accessible.

4.26. Pending direct inspection, NDHA-E is identified as a probable non-designated heritage asset on the basis of the tithe-map alignment. Should access become possible prior to commencement, a supplementary note confirming the status of the wall and, if required, an appropriate record of its fabric, should be prepared.

5. Public Rights of Way

5.1. The Project Site is not publicly visible from the High Street or from Grove Road. Its western (rear) boundary is screened by the rear elevations and garden walls of the properties fronting the east side of the High Street, and its eastern (front) boundary is occupied by the existing chalet bungalow, which closes off views of the rear yard from Grove Road.

5.2. The closest public right of way is SHER26, which terminates at Tanners Hill approximately 40m east-north-east of the Project Site entrance. No recorded public right of way crosses or immediately adjoins the Project Site, and the Project Site is not visible from SHER26.

6. Historic Development

6.1. Sherston is a small historic market town in north-west Wiltshire. Documentary references to the settlement date from the ninth century, and the modern street pattern preserves the form of a compact purpose-built medieval borough centred on the wide High Street, which originally functioned as the market place. The Project Site lies in a backland position to the west of Grove Road (historically Back Lane) and immediately east of the rear gardens of properties fronting the historic High Street.

6.2. Sherston was laid out as a purpose-built medieval borough to the south of the earlier village and manorial enclosure. A weekly market was granted to Matthew Bezill in 1241, confirmed by further grants for fairs in 1248 and 1252, and by the late fourteenth century the settlement was of sufficient size to return more taxpayers than the neighbouring borough of Calne in the 1377 poll tax. The town was arranged along a single wide street, now High Street which functioned as the marketplace, with burgage plots laid out to either side and terminating at Back Lane (now Grove Road) on the east and Back Street on the west. The market function was lost following the fire of 1511, although the medieval plan-form of the town survived substantially intact, and the legibility of the burghal layout is one of the principal elements of the special architectural and historic interest of the Sherston Conservation Area.

6.3. The Project Site lies at the eastern (Back Lane) end of one of these burgage plots. Its rear (west) boundary lies approximately 40m east of the buildings fronting High Street, a depth consistent with the standard medieval burgage-plot form. The Project Site therefore occupies a position within the medieval burghal layout of Sherston.

6.4. The historic development of the Project Site is examined here through the First Series and subsequent Ordnance Survey editions, the Sherston Tithe Map of 1839, and the Lloyd George “Domesday” Survey of 1911. The OS extracts reproduced below are taken from the National Library of Scotland’s online collection of historic OS maps.

First Series Ordnance Survey, Sheet XXXIV, surveyed 1808–1816

6.5. The First Series Ordnance Survey, surveyed between 1808 and 1816, shows development in the vicinity of the Project Site at the beginning of the 19th century. The scale of the First Series is not sufficient to establish how the buildings shown relate to the modern site layout, but it confirms that Sherston was an established, substantially built-up settlement at this date, with a recognisable High Street frontage.

Sherston Tithe Map, 1839

6.6. The Sherston Tithe Map of 1839 provides the first detailed record of the Project Site. The Project Site is shown as Plot 18, owned and occupied by William Amos and described in the Apportionment as “House, Garden and Yard”. The adjoining Plot 19 to the northeast was owned by John Jones and occupied by Francis Evans, and is described as “House and Garden”.

6.7. The western portion of the Project Site is shown as developed with a T-shaped building, coloured grey on the Tithe Map (1839). On tithe surveys the standard convention is that dwelling houses are washed pink or salmon, while ancillary, agricultural or industrial buildings are coloured grey or left uncoloured. The grey colouring therefore suggests a non-residential function, most likely a farm building, workshop or outbuilding, rather than a dwelling. The accompanying apportionment, however, records the plot as containing a house. The T-shaped footprint is equally consistent with a small cottage, a farmstead range or a workshop of this date, and it is possible the structure served a mixed or transitional function, such as a dwelling of modest status in partial disuse or an ancillary range associated with the adjoining tenancy. It should be noted, however, that the apportionment post-dates the map by six years. The apparent inconsistency between the two records may therefore reflect a change of use in the intervening period rather than any error in the cartographic or documentary record.



Figure 3 1839 Sherston Tithe Map. Project Site outlined in red.

Ordnance Survey 25-inch, Wiltshire Sheet XII.3, surveyed 1885, published 1886

6.8. By the time of the first large-scale Ordnance Survey of the area, the rear (western) part of the Project Site had been developed with a linear range of three substantial buildings set along the southern boundary of the plot, together with a cluster of smaller ancillary units to the north.

6.9. The plot boundaries recorded on the 1885 map indicate that the two western buildings within the linear range were associated with the High Street property now known as The Pines, and formed part of its service curtilage. The third, eastern, building within the linear range appears to have fallen within the curtilage of the property on the plot now occupied by no. 4 Grove Road (at that date fronting Back Lane). The cluster of smaller buildings to the north would appear to have belonged to the curtilage of the neighbouring property to the south, now known as Draper's Rest, although the boundary line is not drawn with sufficient clarity to confirm this with certainty.

6.10. The access lane along the northern edge of the Project Site was already in place at this date and its alignment corresponds largely to the modern access. The eastern part of the Project Site, fronting Back Lane (now Grove Road) in the vicinity of the present no. 5 Grove Road, is shown as open land defined as an orchard, with a small pond to the west.

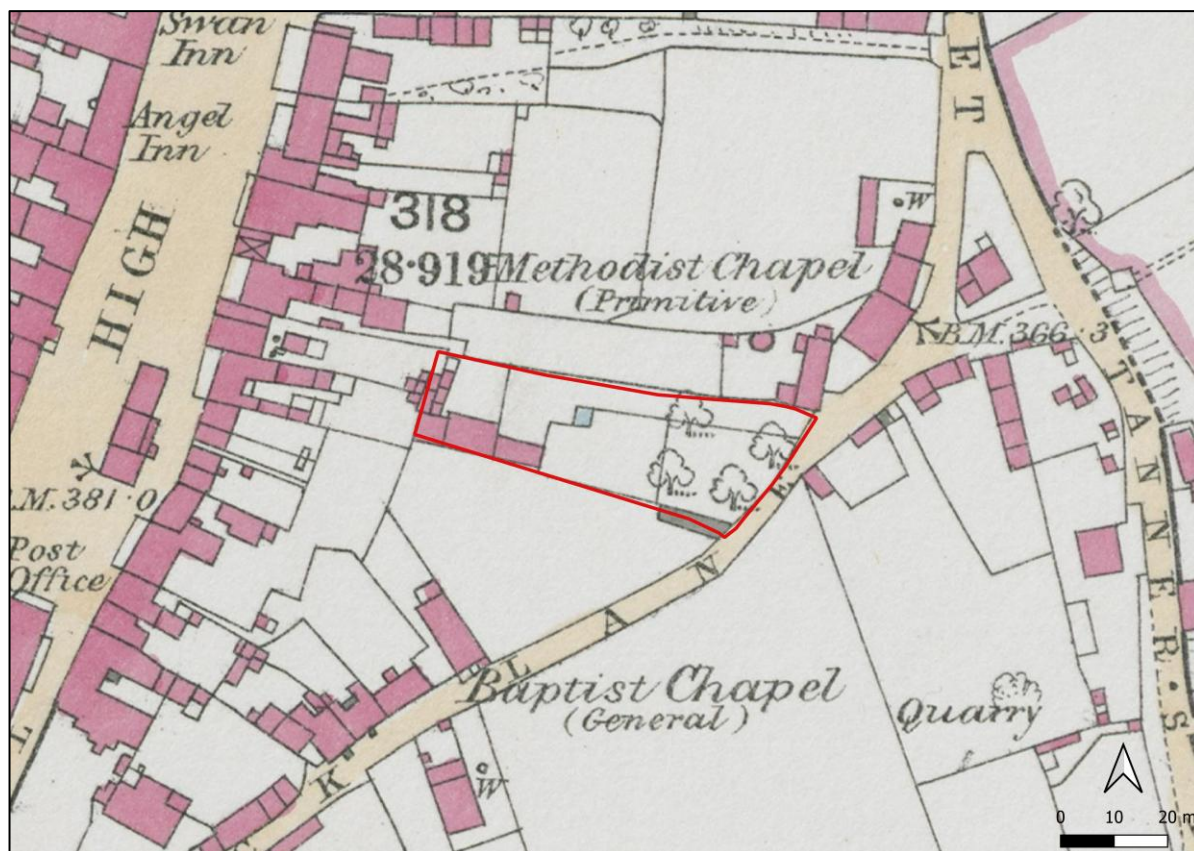


Figure 4 Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25-inch, Wiltshire Sheet XII.3, surveyed 1885, published 1886. Project Site outlined in red. [Reproduced from the National Library of Scotland.]

Ordnance Survey 25-inch, Wiltshire Sheet XII.3, revised 1899, published 1900

6.11. The revised edition of 1899–1900 records evidence of a change in ownership within the rear range between 1885 and the end of the century. The western plot boundary has been enclosed, separating the southern linear range from the High Street property to which it had previously belonged. This suggests a re-organisation of the tenure and working arrangements of the rear yards at the end of the nineteenth century rather than any substantial rebuilding, as the overall footprint of the buildings remains broadly consistent with that recorded in 1885.

Lloyd George “Domesday” Survey, 1911 (Ref. 357, Back Lane)

6.12. The Lloyd George “Domesday” Survey of 1911 records the Project Site (Ref. 357, Back Lane) as “buildings and land”, occupied by P. Newth and owned by D. V. L. Neale (or Reale). The surveyor’s description provides a detailed inventory of the property at this date:

“Stone and stone-tiled cottage with garden, 2 bedrooms, attic, sitting room, kitchen, small back kitchen, shed, dairy, stable, shed with loft, stone and iron barn, 2 stone and iron cow stalls, pigstye.”

6.13. The combined land and buildings were valued at £300. This record confirms that by the early 20th century the rear of the Project Site operated as a small working holding combining

residential accommodation (the stone and stone-tiled cottage) with a suite of ancillary agricultural and service buildings, dairy, stable, barn, cow stalls and pigsty, consistent with the mixed yard uses recorded on the Ordnance Survey.

Ordnance Survey 25-inch, Wiltshire Sheet XII.3, revised 1919, published 1921

6.14. The revised edition of 1919–1921 records no significant change to the Project Site between 1899 and 1919. The rear range and the associated yard buildings remain in substantially the same form as that recorded on the 1899 edition.

Twentieth century to present

6.15. Contemporary newspaper records, searched via the British Newspaper Archive, indicate that the lane along which the Project Site fronts, historically known as Back Lane, was renamed Grove Road in the mid-1950s. References to the Project Site and its immediate neighbours in documents and mapping earlier than the mid-1950s use the “Back Lane” address; the modern “Grove Road” address is adopted from that date onwards.

6.16. The principal twentieth-century change to the immediate vicinity of the Project Site is the construction of the existing chalet-style bungalow at no. 5 Grove Road, which occupies the eastern (Grove Road) end of the former orchard plot. This 1960s dwelling is a modern insertion and post-dates the historic pattern of orchard and ancillary yard use recorded on the 19th and early 20th century mapping. The rear of the site continued in mixed service and ancillary use and is now occupied by the existing builders’ yard with associated outbuildings proposed for demolition.

Summary of historic development

6.17. Taken together, the documentary and cartographic evidence demonstrates that the rear (western) part of the Project Site has been built upon and used in association with the High Street burgage plots from at least the early nineteenth century, and probably earlier. The Tithe Map of 1839 records a T-shaped building on the western part of the site which is likely to have been converted to a dwelling by the mid-19th century. By the late 19th century the site formed part of a working rear yard associated variously with the properties now known as The Pines, 4 Grove Road and Draper’s Rest, and by 1911 the rear of the site contained a small cottage with a suite of agricultural outbuildings.

6.18. The chalet bungalow at no. 5 Grove Road is a 1960s addition, and the buildings within the present builders’ yard are not themselves of historic origin, but they occupy a position of long-standing ancillary built development at the rear of the historic High Street frontages.

7. Planning Policy

7.1. With regards to the relevant policy and development framework, the following are considered appropriate to the current proposal:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2024;

"207. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

210. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

215. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

218. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

219. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.”

Wiltshire Core Strategy adopted 2015

Core Policy 58 Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment.

“Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment.

Designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance, including:

- i. nationally significant archaeological remains;
- ii. World Heritage Sites within and adjacent to Wiltshire;
- iii. buildings and structures of special architectural or historic interest;
- iv. the special character or appearance of conservation areas;
- v. historic parks and gardens;
- vi. important landscapes, including registered battlefields and townscapes.

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. The potential contribution of these heritage assets towards wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits will also be utilised where this can be delivered in a sensitive and appropriate manner in accordance with Core Policy 57 (Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping).

Heritage assets at risk will be monitored and development proposals that improve their condition will be encouraged. The advice of statutory and local consultees will be sought in consideration of such applications.”

8. Proposed Development

8.1. The Proposed Development, submitted as planning application PL/2025/06413 by Mr N Palmer and prepared by Poulson Architectural Design, seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing chalet-style bungalow at No. 5 Grove Road and of the modern builders' yard structures occupying the western (rear) part of the Project Site, and for the erection of three new dwellings.

8.2. The scheme comprises a pair of semi-detached three-bedroom market houses addressing Grove Road Plots 1 and 2, on the footprint of the demolished bungalow and a single four bedroom detached dwelling within the rear yard, Plot 3. The proposal is shown on drawing 334 (Poulson Architectural Design, dated 20 April 2026, revision B), comprising the Project Site Location Plan, the Proposed Block and Roof Plan with boundary-wall sections, Proposed Ground and First Floor Plans and Elevations for Plots 1 and 2, Proposed Ground and First Floor Plans and Elevations for Plot 3, and a Proposed Street Scene along Grove Road.

8.3. The works of demolition associated with the scheme comprise the existing 1960s chalet-style bungalow at No. 5 Grove Road together with its attached integral garage, the linked range of modern concrete-block and profiled-steel-clad workshop units occupying the western (rear) part of the Project Site, and the associated modern yard apparatus (painted steel container inscribed "E L Palmer Sherston Ltd", fuel tanks, yard cover structures and stockpiled material). In addition, the existing concrete-capped drystone boundary wall separating No. 5 Grove Road from the access drive is to be removed and rebuilt in natural stone in order to accommodate Plots 1 and 2 and to act as a new retaining structure.

8.4. Plots 1 and 2 comprise a pair of semi-detached two-storey dwellings of three bedrooms each, sited on the footprint of the demolished bungalow and addressing Grove Road with their principal (southeast) elevation. At ground floor each dwelling comprises an entrance hall, lounge, kitchen / dining area, utility and downstairs WC, with a party wall running between the two dwellings. At first floor each comprises three bedrooms (one with en-suite), a family bathroom, landing and store. Elevations are shown to the east (front, addressing Grove Road), north (side), west (rear) and south (side).

8.5. Plot 3 is a single detached two-storey dwelling of four bedrooms, sited within the rear yard of the Project Site on broadly the footprint of the existing modern workshop range. At ground floor the dwelling comprises an entrance hall, kitchen/breakfast room, living room, dining room, utility, store, integral garage and downstairs WC. At first floor four bedrooms are arranged around a landing, with en-suite, family bathroom and store. Elevations are shown to the east (front), north (side), west (rear) and south (side).

8.6. The materials schedule for all three dwellings, as set out in the materials panel on each of the drawings in the pack, comprises Cotswold natural stone walling to all elevations, with natural stone heads and natural stone cills; grey slate roof coverings with integrated photovoltaic panels; Conservation green (RAL 6021) aluminium-glazed uPVC windows and doors; composite painted front doors; and black rainwater goods. The materials specification represents a revision from the scheme as originally submitted, which had indicated reconstituted stone walling and cills and which the Wiltshire Council Senior Conservation Officer expressly objected to in her consultation response of 8 August 2025 (see Section 1 above). The current scheme adopts natural stone in response to that advice.

8.7. Boundary treatments are set out on the Proposed Block and Roof Plan and on accompanying boundary-wall sections. To the front and rear of each new dwelling, 1.8m-high natural stone boundary walls are specified. The new boundary wall replacing the removed drystone wall between No. 5 Grove Road and the access drive is shown as a natural stone wall.

8.8. The Proposed Block and Roof Plan labels the south boundary wall (now forming the internal south wall of the existing workshop range) and the west boundary wall as “Existing stone boundary wall retained”. The north boundary wall is labelled as “Retaining lower portion to existing wall”, which may result in a loss of some historic fabric.

8.9. The surviving masonry of the 19th century building to the rear of the Project Site will be demolished to allow for the development of Plot 3.

8.10. Access to the Project Site is gained from Grove Road via the existing access drive running east–west along the northern boundary of the Site; no new vehicular access is proposed. Off-street parking and turning space is provided within each plot curtilage, with an integral garage at Plot 3 and external parking at Plots 1 and 2. The Proposed Street Scene (drawing 334/104 rev B) shows Plots 1 and 2 inserted between No. 5a Grove Road to the west and No. 4 Grove Road to the east, maintaining the established frontage line and the typical two-storey-and-attic gabled massing of the Grove Road streetscape.

9. Statement of Significance

9.1. The heritage significance of the assets affected by the Proposed Development has been assessed following the approach set out in Historic England’s Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2008), which identifies heritage significance as arising from a combination of evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal values, and following the framework established by paragraph 207 of the NPPF (December 2024), which requires significance to be described including any

contribution made by setting. The significance of each asset is considered in turn below, drawing on the site survey (April 2026), the architect's package (drawing 334, 20 April 2026, revision B), the Sherston Neighbourhood Plan (2019), the National Heritage List for England, and the documentary record discussed in Section 6 (Historic Development).

9.2. The significance of the Sherston Conservation Area (designated 1973) derives principally from the survival of the medieval and post-medieval market-town plan of Sherston, the long east–west High Street terminating in the Market Cross, the perpendicular burgage plots, the close-knit vernacular building stock in coursed Cotswold limestone, stone-slate roofs and lime-washed render, and the relationship between the settlement and the River Avon valley to the south. Its evidential and historical values are anchored in the continuity of the medieval plan and the visible record of successive phases of vernacular building; its aesthetic value is derived from the uniformly Cotswold character of its materials and the picturesque grain of the village. The Project Site sits within the Conservation Area, but in a backland position behind the High Street frontage; it is not a prominent component of the Conservation Area's character, and its contribution to the Area's significance is modest, comprising (i) the survival of boundary walls on alignments recorded on the 1839 tithe map and (ii) the rear-plot, working-yard character which itself is typical of the hinterland of the Cotswold market towns.

9.3. The significance of the designated listed buildings in the vicinity of the Site, including the listed group on the east side of the High Street (The Pines at No. 16, Draper's Rest at Nos. 18 and 20, and No. 22) which back onto the Project Site and the other listed buildings of the village core, derives principally from their architectural and historical values, and from their collective contribution to the streetscape of the Conservation Area. Their settings include the streets they address, the views along and across the village, and in some cases their rear garden environments. In respect of the Project Site specifically, the rear elevations of the listed buildings on the east side of the High Street lie approximately 40m from the site's western (rear) boundary, and the rear gardens of those properties are terraced up the slope away from the site (by approximately 1.3–1.9m at the rear garden levels given in Section 2). No intervisibility between the Project Site and those rear elevations was observed at the time of the site visit. The contribution made by the Project Site to the setting of these designated buildings is accordingly limited and is mediated through the Conservation Area generally rather than through any direct visual or spatial relationship.

9.4. The three off-site non-designated heritage assets identified in Section 4, Sherston Methodist Chapel on Grove Road, No. 12 Grove Road, and Island Cottage are modest 18th and 19th century buildings constructed in coursed Cotswold limestone under stone-slate roofs, representative of the local vernacular tradition. Their significance is derived from their evidential

and aesthetic values as surviving examples of that tradition and, for Island Cottage, from its local landmark position at the junction of Grove Road. Their settings are principally the streetscape of Grove Road and the Conservation Area in which they stand. The Project Site makes a limited contribution to their settings, chiefly through its retention of historic boundary walls and the continuity of the rear-plot grain along Grove Road.

9.5. The collective significance of the on-site non-designated heritage assets, NDHA-A (the south boundary wall now internalised within the modern workshop units), NDHA-C (the north boundary wall along the access drive), NDHA-D (the boundary wall separating No. 5 Grove Road from the rest of the Site), and (potentially) NDHA-E (the western/rear boundary wall, inaccessible at the site visit) lies primarily in their evidential value, they preserve, as surviving fabric, the plot configuration recorded on the Sherston tithe map of 1839, and thereby constitute a legible physical record of the 19th century burgage and workshop layout of this part of the village. Individually, each wall is of local interest as an example of the Cotswold vernacular boundary-wall tradition, coursed Cotswold limestone rubble and contributes in a minor way to the character of the Conservation Area. None of these walls is of more than local, low-to-modest significance individually; their value lies in their collective witness to the historic layout of the Site.

9.6. The 19th century standing stone building in the southwestern corner of the Site (NDHA-B) is of modest local heritage significance. Its interest resides in its surviving wall fabric, coursed Cotswold limestone rubble standing to full eaves height which contributes a minor evidential record of 19th century usage. Its historical associations are generic to the village's 19th century trade and craft activity rather than specific to any event or person, and its communal and aesthetic values are low: the building is not publicly visible, it has been hemmed in by later modern concrete-block units, its interior is whitewashed and cluttered with workshop machinery, and its roof structure was wholly replaced in the mid-20th century (c.1960s) and is not itself of heritage interest. The building's significance is modest, local, and primarily evidential; it does not rise above the level of the other on-site non-designated heritage assets, and is capable of being adequately recorded through photographic building recording and a written description prior to any loss.

9.7. Taken together, the heritage significance of the Project Site and its setting can be summarised as follows. The Project Site sits within a designated Conservation Area of high significance, to which it makes a modest contribution through the survival of historic boundary walls on an early 19th century alignment with potential earlier heritage. The designated listed buildings in the vicinity are of high individual significance but have little direct spatial or visual relationship to the Project Site, which accordingly makes a limited contribution to their setting. The on-site non-designated heritage assets, three surviving boundary walls, one standing workshop building, and a potential fourth wall, are of collective local significance, anchored principally in their evidential record of the 1839 plot configuration; individually each is of low-to-modest significance.

9.8. The significance of the Project Site is therefore best characterised as modest: genuine but local, capable of being preserved through the retention of the majority of the on-site historic fabric under the proposals, and capable of being adequately recorded where (as for the standing workshop building and the boundary wall north of No. 5 Grove Road) physical intervention is proposed.

10. Impact Assessment

10.1. The impact of the Proposed Development on the heritage assets identified in Sections 3 and 4 is assessed below, having regard to the statutory tests in sections 66 and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the policies of the NPPF (December 2024) at paragraphs 207–216, Core Strategy Policies CP57 and CP58, and the Sherston Neighbourhood Plan (2019). The assessment considers, in turn, the direct physical impact on on-site fabric, the construction-phase risk to retained fabric, and the setting impacts on designated and non-designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the Site. The balance between the harm identified and the public benefits of the scheme is then set out.

10.2. The physical works proposed involve the demolition of the 1960s chalet-style bungalow (of no heritage interest), the demolition of the 19th century standing stone workshop building in the southwestern corner of the Site (NDHA-B), the demolition of the modern concrete-block and profiled-steel workshop range and its associated yard apparatus (of no heritage interest), and the removal and rebuild of the boundary wall separating No. 5 Grove Road from the access drive (NDHA-D). All other on-site historic fabric, the south boundary wall incorporated into the modern workshop units (NDHA-A), the north boundary wall along the access drive (NDHA-C), and (pending confirmation on access) the western boundary wall (NDHA-E), is to be retained (or partially retained / rebuilt) under the proposals as shown on drawing 334, revision B.

10.3. The demolition of the 19th century standing stone workshop building (NDHA-B) will result in the total loss of that non-designated heritage asset's surviving historic fabric. As set out in the Statement of Significance above, the heritage interest of the building resides in its wall fabric alone, the roof structure having been wholly replaced in the mid-20th century, and is of modest, local, primarily evidential value. The loss of that fabric is nevertheless real and requires assessment under paragraph 216 of the NPPF, which requires a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. It is recommended that the loss be mitigated through a programme of photographic building recording (to Historic England's Level 2

as set out in *Understanding Historic Buildings*, 2016). This programme would preserve the building “by record” and mitigates the harm proportionate to the building’s significance.

10.4. The removal and rebuild of the boundary wall (NDHA-D) to accommodate Plots 1 and 2 will result in the loss of that non-designated heritage asset’s surviving drystone fabric. The scheme proposes the rebuild of the wall in natural Cotswold stone to match the retained fabric elsewhere on the Site, which preserves the historic alignment of the boundary and its traditional vernacular expression. It is recommended that the stonework from the existing wall be salvaged and re-used in the new wall where practicable. With these mitigation measures the harm to NDHA-D is materially reduced but not eliminated; residual harm is moderate and local.

10.5. The setting impacts of the Proposed Development on the designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the Project Site are, overall, neutral to slightly positive. The rear elevations of the listed buildings on the east side of the High Street (including The Pines at No. 16, Drapers Rest at Nos. 18–20, and No. 22) lie approximately 40m from the western boundary of the Project Site, are separated from it by terraced rear gardens standing some 1.3–1.9m above the Site ground level, and are not intervisible with the Project Site. The removal of the commercial builders’ yard from the rear of the Project Site, with its associated daily delivery and commercial vehicle movements, will remove a source of noise, traffic and activity which is at odds with the tranquil residential character of this part of the Conservation Area and will therefore represent a modest enhancement of the rear-setting environment of those listed buildings.

10.6. The effect on other listed buildings in the wider village core is neutral given the absence of visual or spatial relationship with the Project Site. In statutory terms, the Proposed Development preserves the setting of the listed buildings affected (section 66 of the 1990 Act).

10.7. In respect of Sherston Methodist Chapel (1872) on Grove Road, the Proposed Development maintains the established Grove Road frontage, replaces the 1960s chalet-style bungalow and its integral garage with a pair of traditionally-proportioned two-storey dwellings in natural Cotswold stone under grey slate, and is consistent with the Chapel’s setting; the impact is considered to be neutral, with a minor positive component from the replacement of a post-war infill with a traditional-materials vernacular design.

10.8. The impact of the Proposed Development on the character and appearance of the Sherston Conservation Area (section 72(1) of the 1990 Act) is considered, overall, to be positive. The Project Site’s present condition, with a 1960s chalet-style bungalow at the Grove Road frontage, a rear yard occupied by a range of modern concrete-block and profiled-steel workshop buildings, a painted steel storage container, and associated commercial plant, sits uncomfortably within the Conservation Area’s otherwise tranquil rural-village character. The daily commercial traffic and

delivery movements to and from the yard contribute a level of noise, activity and visual intrusion which is at odds with the established character of Grove Road and of the Conservation Area generally. The removal of that commercial use, and its replacement with three new dwellings built in Cotswold natural stone with natural stone heads and cills, grey slate roofs, Conservation green (RAL 6021) joinery, black rainwater goods, and 1.8m-high natural stone boundary walls will substantially enhance the appearance of the Project Site and of the Grove Road streetscape. The retention of the majority of the historic boundary walls maintains the tithe map plot alignments. Taken together, these factors represent a modest but genuine enhancement of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

10.9. The effect on the three off-site non-designated heritage assets on Grove Road (the former Sherston Methodist Chapel, No. 12 Grove Road and Island Cottage) is similarly positive, deriving chiefly from the improved streetscape environment.

10.10. The Proposed Development therefore gives rise to two elements of harm to non-designated heritage assets, the total loss of NDHA-B, mitigated through photographic and written recording, and the partial loss of NDHA-D, mitigated through rebuild in matching materials. Under the balanced judgement required by NPPF paragraph 216, the scale of harm and the modest, local, primarily evidential significance of the assets affected are to be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme. Those public benefits include: the delivery of three new market dwellings in a sustainable village location within a Conservation Area identified as having potential for infill development in the Sherston Conservation Character Appraisal; the removal of a commercial builders' yard use whose daily traffic and operational activity is incompatible with the tranquil character of Grove Road and of this part of the Conservation Area; the replacement of a 1960s chalet-style bungalow and a modern concrete-block yard range with three new dwellings designed in natural Cotswold materials consistent with the Conservation Area character; and the retention of the majority of the on-site historic fabric, preserving the tithe map plot configuration. Taking these benefits together with the recording and mitigation measures proposed, the Proposed Development is considered to cause less than substantial, locally-scaled harm to non-designated heritage assets which is decisively outweighed by the public benefits delivered; no harm is identified to designated heritage assets, whose settings are preserved and, in modest respects, enhanced.

11. Conclusion

11.1. This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared in response to the consultation response of Wiltshire Council's Senior Conservation Officer dated 8 August 2025 on planning

application PL/2025/06413, and to provide the objective assessment of significance and of impact required by paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024).

11.2. The Project Site lies within the Sherston Conservation Area and within the Cotswolds National Landscape. It is not itself a designated heritage asset and contains no listed buildings. Three Grade II listed buildings on the east side of the High Street (Draper's Rest, No. 22 and The Pines) adjoin the rear of the Project Site, but are not intervisible with it and stand on ground raised some 1.3–1.9m above the site. Three off-site non-designated heritage assets are identified on Grove Road, the former Sherston Methodist Chapel (a Wiltshire Council-confirmed NDHA), Cuckoo Cottage and Island Cottage. Five on-site components of surviving historic fabric have been identified as non-designated heritage assets (NDHA-A to NDHA-E), each anchored in the plot configuration recorded on the Sherston tithe map of 1839.

11.3. The Proposed Development gives rise to two elements of direct physical harm to non-designated heritage assets: the total loss of the 19th century standing workshop range (NDHA-B) to accommodate Plot 3, and the removal and rebuild of the drystone boundary wall between No. 5 Grove Road and the access drive (NDHA-D) to accommodate Plots 1 and 2. Both are of modest, local, primarily evidential significance. Mitigation is proposed by way of a programme of building recording to Historic England's Understanding Historic Buildings (2016) Level 2 standard for NDHA-B in advance of demolition, with the level of record to be confirmed by the Local Planning Authority; and the rebuild of NDHA-D in natural Cotswold stone on the existing historic alignment, with the salvage and re-use of the existing wall stone and the retention of the historic alignment recommended. The remaining on-site fabric, the south boundary wall (NDHA-A), the north boundary wall along the access drive (NDHA-C) and the probable west boundary wall (NDHA-E) is retained.

11.4. The design of the scheme, as revised in response to the Conservation Officer's observations, is consistent with the guidance of the Sherston Conservation Area Statement for the Noble Street / Grove Road / Tanners Hill Identity Area. The Statement expressly identifies Grove Road as appropriate for infill and backland development subject to careful consideration, names Grove Road as the one location at which new dwellings "can be set further back, generally behind dry stone boundary or retaining walls", and identifies the Grove Road streetscape as a target for enhancement. The removal of the 1960s chalet bungalow at the Grove Road frontage and of the commercial builders' yard at the rear of the Site, together with their replacement in Cotswold natural stone with natural stone heads and cills, grey slate roofs, Conservation green (RAL 6021) joinery and 1.8m natural stone boundary walls, is judged to represent a modest but genuine enhancement of the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area.

11.5. In the terms of the statutory tests, the Proposed Development preserves the setting of the listed buildings affected for the purposes of section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and preserves and modestly enhances the character and appearance of the Conservation Area for the purposes of section 72(1) of the same Act. In the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), the harm to the non-designated heritage assets affected is less than substantial, locally-scaled, and is capable of being substantially mitigated through the recording and rebuild measures described above; under the balanced judgement required by paragraph 216 the residual harm is decisively outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme.

11.6. The Proposed Development is accordingly considered to be consistent with NPPF paragraphs 207, 208, 210, 212, 216, 218 and 219, with Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015), and with the Sherston Neighbourhood Plan (2019), and is supportable in heritage terms subject to the imposition of a pre-commencement condition requiring a written scheme of investigation for the building recording of NDHA-B and the documented salvage and re-use of NDHA-D stone on its historic alignment.

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