

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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(South/West)

Officer's Name: Andrew Thomas
Officer's Title: Planning Officer

Application No: **PL/2026/02266**

Erection of 9 residential dwellings, access, parking, gardens, landscaping and associated works
Land south of Park Street, Warminster

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

Recommendations:

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

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

Policy:

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

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

The NPPF outlines government policy, including its policy in respect of the historic environment. Section 16 of the NPPF 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the Government's high-level policies concerning heritage and sustainable development. Paragraphs 214-16 of the NPPF require a balanced approach with any harm which would be caused being weighed against the potential public benefits which might be achieved. Paragraph 210 requires local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

National Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on interpreting the NPPF.

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

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

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

HE GPA3 Part 1:

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

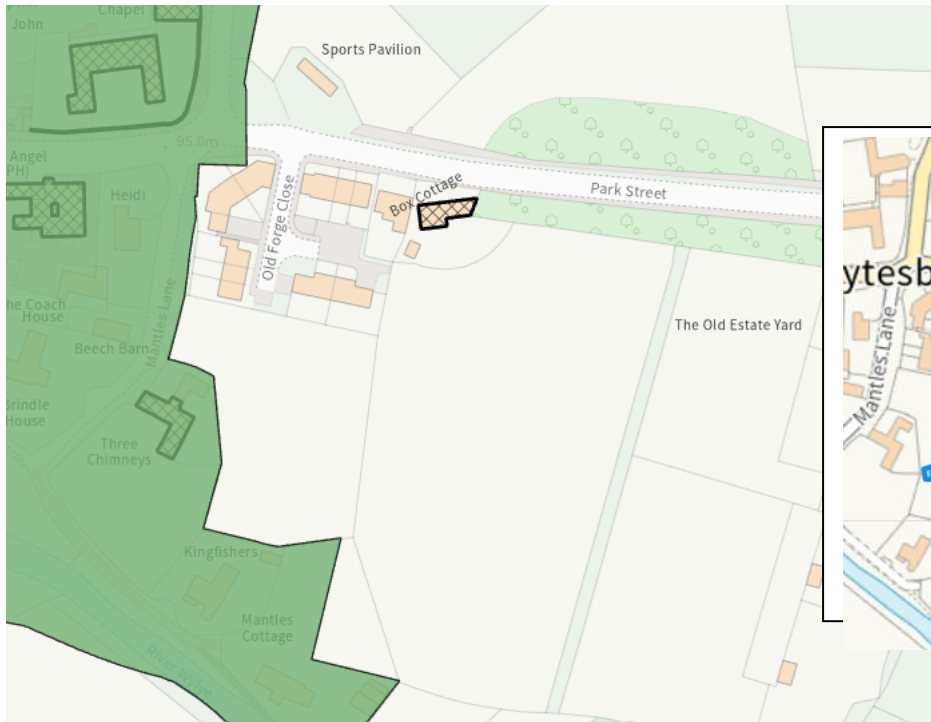
"The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. ...views of or from an asset will play an important part..."

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

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

Site and assets considered:

The proposed site is not in the Heytesbury conservation area but I would consider it to be within its setting. There are also two listed buildings (grade II) in the vicinity: Box Cottage (formerly listed as 'Tinkers') and Three Chimneys.



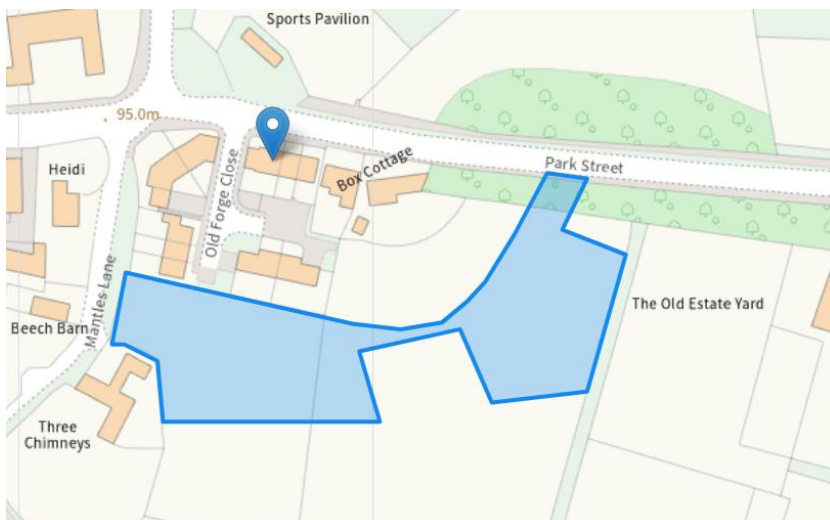
Across the road (at the junction) is the important building of Hospital of St John which is listed at grade II. The gates, walls and railings are separately listed at grade II.

Vestige of the parkland to Heytesbury House – the parkland being a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA):

Relevant pre-application enquiry

ENQ/2025/01848

Permission in principle application for a development of between 6 - 9 dwelling (two of which would be self build/custom built



Proposal:

Access onto Park Street

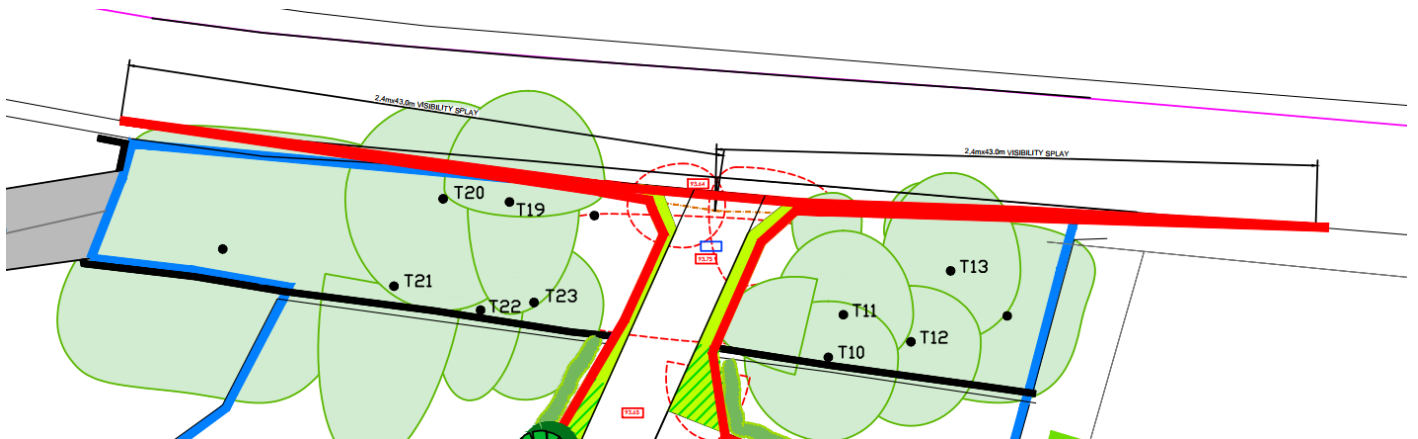
In respect of the pre-application enquiry, I commented in particular on the means of access from Park Street and said the following:

Trees along the boundary of the site are a key feature of the area. They flag the transition from the built-up village core to the rural countryside setting. As such, they make a significant contribution to the character of the area. Their more informal, 'scruffy' appearance is part of the area's character.

The key issue, and one that I perhaps did not comment on sufficiently in respect of the 2017 application, will be the access points. Splayed accesses with wide pavements and long sightlines are often at odds with the informal historic character of the area. I would have reservations about manicured grass verges and wide splayed openings. Also, the issue of footpaths within the site, to avoid a very suburban character (particularly in relation to the 'barns' side of the site) should be carefully considered.

The 3D sketch view suggests that this will be relatively low key. However, I note that my Highway's colleague says 'The submitted plans show visibility splays of 2.4m x 43m, which are sufficient for the context and meet National Guidance. The access and splays would be likely to require the removal of trees/vegetation in the vicinity, as well as excavation of the land to address level differences'.

Given my previous comments, and those of my Highways colleague, I would like to see a more detailed plan regarding the proposed access onto Park Street. If the number of trees to be removed could be confirmed (the proposed plan suggests 3 (if that is what the red dashed lined circles indicate) and also whether there would need to be excavation. Also, are pavements proposed?



Design of the new housing

Proposed are three detached units (unit 1, 2 3) which are the inner most houses

Then there are 3 semi-detached pairs of buildings (ie 6 units in total).

The houses are provided with parking spaces; units 1-6 have front and rear gardens and uits 1-3 are arranged around a courtyard.

A number of new trees are proposed (I would hope semi-mature).

A car port barn is proposed with a sedum roof (to serve units 6, 7, 8).

A variety of boundary treatments are proposed including close board fencing and half round post and rail fencing.

In terms of scale and massing of the new units,

Unit 1 = 1 ½ storey

Unit 2 – single storey

Unit 3 – single storey

Units 4/5 = two storey with a pitched roof and chimneys

Units 6/7 = two storey with a pitched roof and chimneys

Units 8/9 = two storey with quarter hipped roofs (and a central chimney)

The design seems largely traditional in character and of an appropriate scale and density. In terms of materials, I would hope for traditional high-quality materials and would recommend that a separate materials palette document is submitted.

In respect of units 4-9 I note that it is the applicant's intention to dispose of these. Whilst the drawings are annotated in respect of the materials to some degree, I would suggest that they need to be annotated to a greater level of detail to ensure that any prospective purchaser is aware of an expectation for high-quality traditional materials to be used. For example, we could request a materials schedule with detailing to show the faux (I assume) chimneys have brick slips; the detailing of the proposed string courses; that the brick will be laid in Flemish bond style with an appropriate brick, the detailing on the doors and windows (brochure would suffice).

Landscaping plan (hard and soft)

I also welcome the submission of a detailed landscaping plan (hard and soft) and that rather than tarmac, the main site road will be a permeable block paving. In view of the intended disposal of part of the site, is it possible to ensure that the infrastructure is completed first (in accordance with the plans) before the plots are actually sold?

Boundary treatments

I also welcome the limitation of close-boarded fencing to the rear of the proposed houses (ie dividing rear gardens) as well as the proposed rear post-and rail fencing and a hedge (which should be native species).

Issues: potential impact on the setting of the conservation area and the setting of any listed buildings.

Information considered/provided:

Paragraph 207 requires that applicants describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. This should include sufficient information to provide a clear understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and its setting and the potential impact of any proposals on that significance.

In this case, whilst the applications are accompanied by a "Heritage Statement". The document 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.

Assessment:

From the heritage statement:

'Tinkers and Three Chimneys were built in what can be described as rural surroundings, with pasture fields to the rear (in the case of Tinkers) and to the eastern side in the case of Three Chimneys. However, these are not designed landscapes, nor are the properties connected to agricultural use. While the rear 'paddock' setting is considered less significant to the heritage value of the listed buildings than their roadside setting and relationship to the rest of the village, it does contribute to their significance to some extent.'

I would agree that the rural setting contributes to their setting in a slight way (lower end of 'less than substantial' scale using the NPPF terminology).

In the same way, I consider that Park Street makes a positive contribution to the setting of the Heytesbury conservation area. In particular the paddock and the informal tree belt lining the road, reinforce the appreciation that this is a rural village. However, recent developments have weakened that appreciation, particularly Forge Close which sits much closer to the boundary of the CA.

I do not consider that the site is within the setting of St John's Hospital.

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.

The site is outside the conservation area and only two listed buildings are within the vicinity. I consider that the proposals would have some slight harm on the setting of both the CA and the cottages by eroding the rural character of the site, and by virtue of introducing an engineered splayed access into Park Street. I consider these harms would be 'less than substantial' and at the lower end of the scale.

Paragraph 215 allows that a level of harm may be offset by public benefits.

If you are minded to grant consent, I would suggest that consideration is given to a more detailed access plan, that clarification is sought re pavements and that a materials schedule is approved (to ensure the quality of the scheme is not eroded further down the line).