

CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference: PL/2026/02479
Application Type: Full planning permission
Consultation Ends:
Case Officer: Amy Houldsworth

Site Address: Beechley Dene, Fountain Way, Salisbury, SP2 7FD

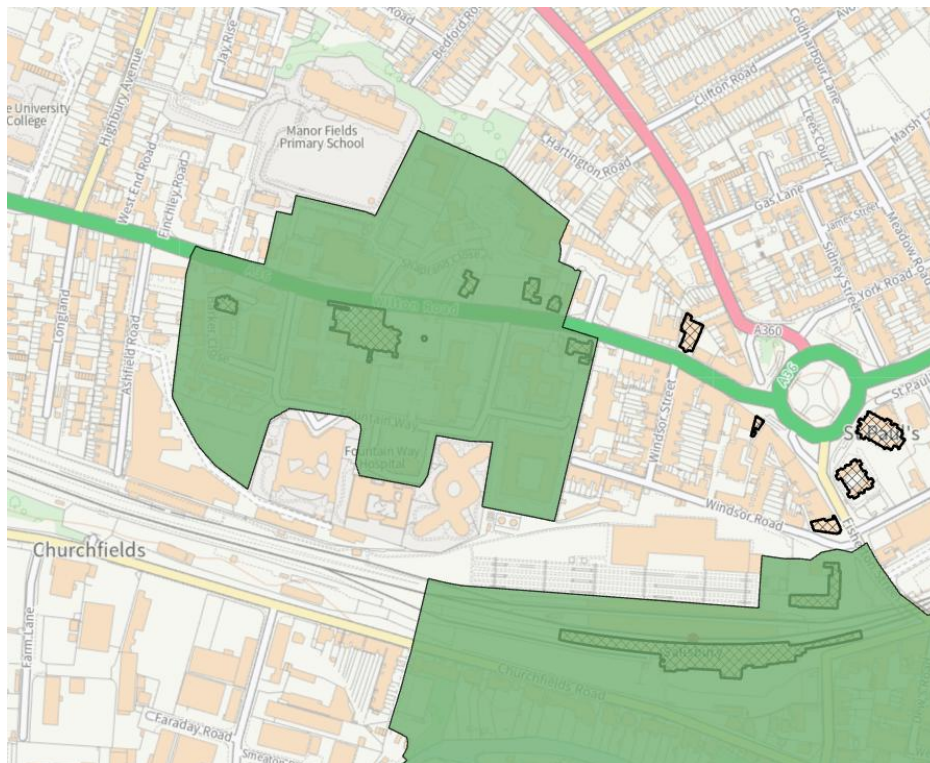
Proposal: Proposed construction of single storey extensions to the Ashdown Unit and Beechlydene Ward and associated external works including hard and soft landscaping.

Recommendation: Approve with Conditions

Site Description/Proposal:

The application site forms part of a complex of health-related buildings. To the immediate south is the main Salisbury to London railway line and station. To the north is now a residential care complex, which contains two listed buildings and is located in the Old Manor Hospital conservation area. There are also a number of other listed buildings in the conservation area, although at a distance from the site. Similarly, to the south east across the railway line is located the listed railway station complex and the Salisbury Conservation Area.

The adjacent road system (Fountain Way) is a private road serving the development and adjacent developments, which leads onto the main A36 road to the north.



Plan showing CA (green) and listed buildings (black hatched)

The site is located within the River Avon Catchment Area, Flood Zone 1.

The application is seeking planning permission for the Proposed construction of single storey extensions to the Ashdown Unit and Beechlydene Ward and associated external works including hard and soft landscaping.

In summary, the proposed works comprise the following:

- **Ashdown Unit (side of building / north-west elevation) – Construction of a new single storey extension circa 110 m2, internal works to the existing ward building, and external works comprising soft and hard landscaping.**
- **Beechlydene Ward (rear of building / south elevation) – Construction of single storey extension circa 40m2, internal alterations to the existing building, and external works including hard and soft landscaping.**

The applicants DAS indicates the following:

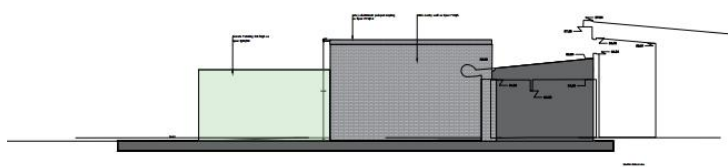
“ AWP is a specialist NHS mental health trust serving around 1.6 million people across Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Swindon and Wiltshire¹. The Trust provides healthcare for people with mental health needs in community-based settings and plays an active role in research, partnerships, and community collaboration to meet the needs of service users, carers and families.

Beechlydene is an acute ward with 21 beds, providing inpatient care to both male and female adults. AWP's acute admissions wards offer assessment and treatment for adults of working age, from 18 to 65 years. The teams on each ward provide care to adults recovering from a mental health crisis who need urgent treatment, as well as supporting service users' recovery by developing relapse prevention plans and offering advice and support.

The Ashdown Unit has 6 beds and is available for male adults. Ashdown is a Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) which provides patients and service users with high levels of support for short periods of time as part of their recovery. PICU works alongside other inpatient ward settings including adult acute wards such as Beechlydene. AWP's PICUs offer rapid intervention to help service users move forward with recovery. The staff work closely with family members and carers, collaborating as a team to meet the needs of everyone that is being cared for.

The works proposed to both the Beechlydene and Ashdown Wards, which are located within the same building (Beechlydene) at the Fountain Way Hospital site, relate to the provision of new Extra Care ('EC') facilities which will provide designated space for service users who may require care and treatment away from the main ward/unit area. The proposed facilities will provide specialised rooms or spaces designed to safely manage situations where a service user is highly distressed away from the main ward. These EC Facilities are intended to improve safety for service users and staff and provide better therapeutic management of behavioural crises, including enhanced observation and risk management.”

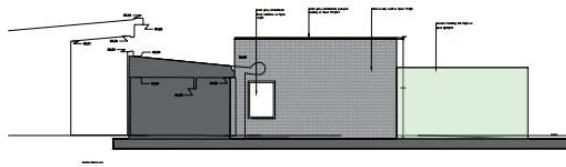
Proposed extension to Beechledene



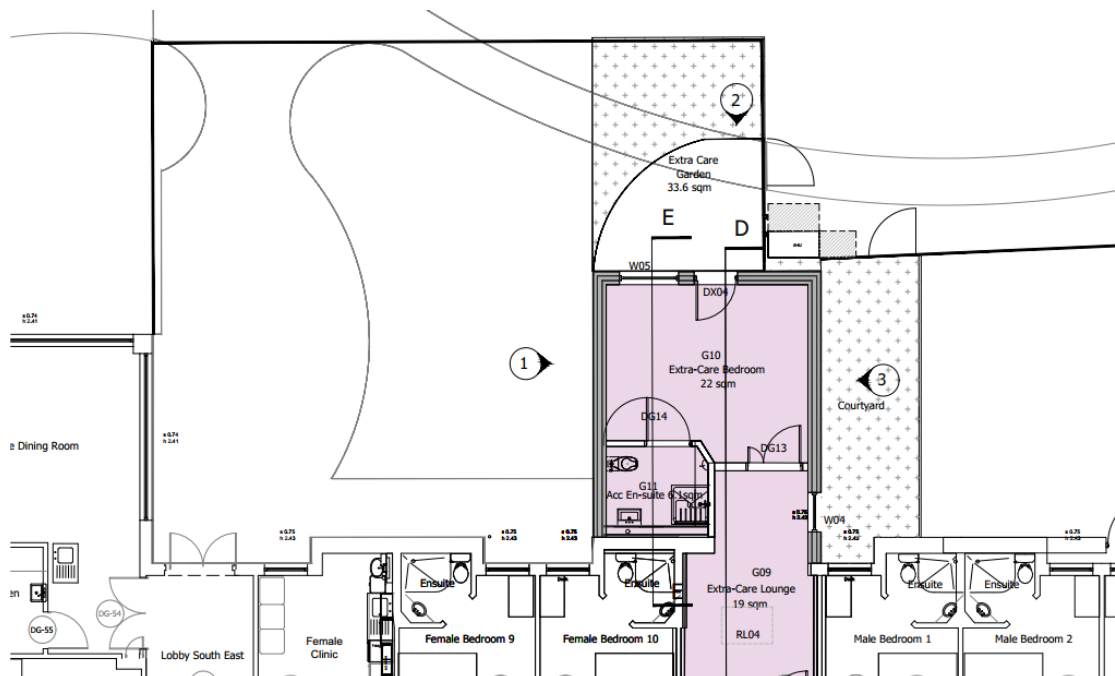
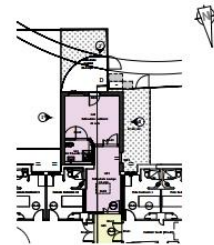
· East Elevation



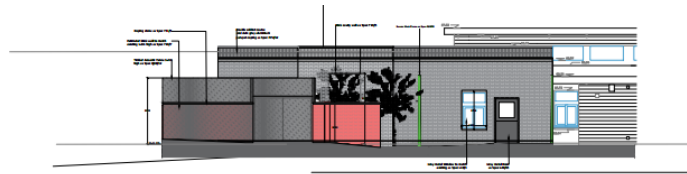
2- North Elevation



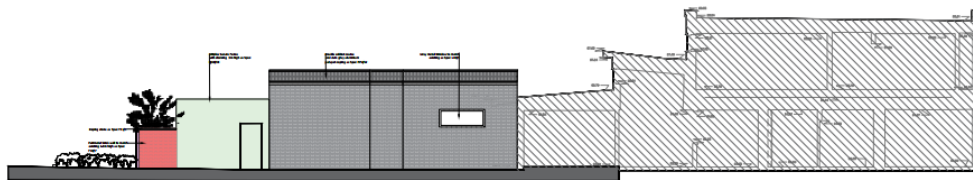
· West Elevation



Proposed extension to Ashdown

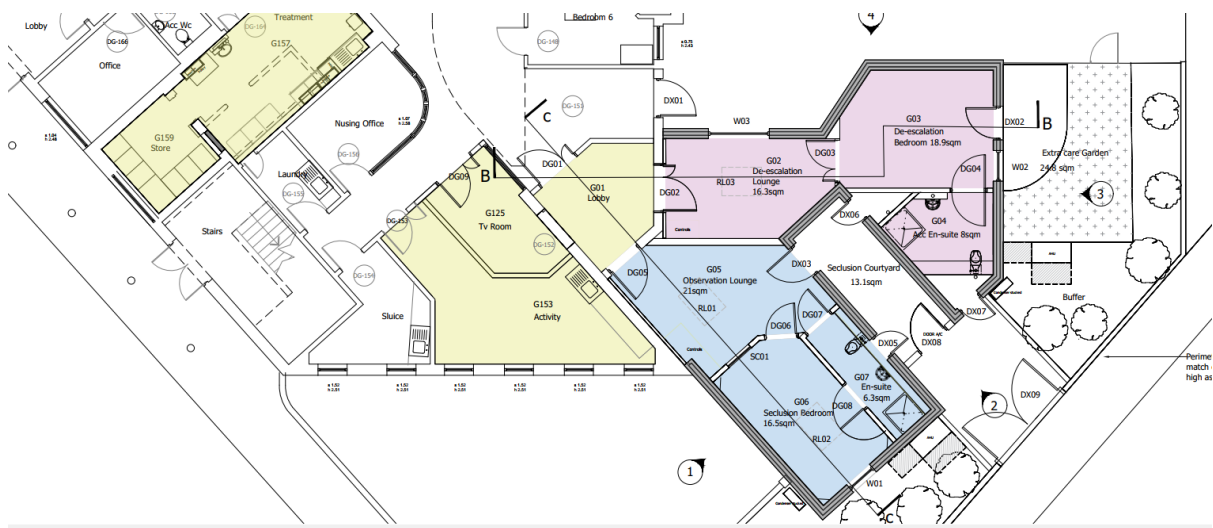
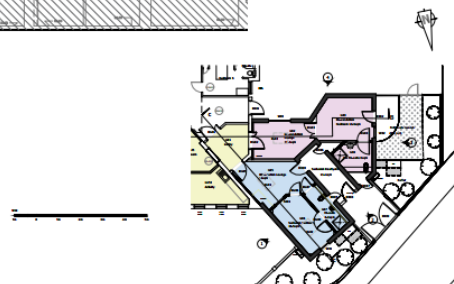


3- West Elevation



4- South Elevation

levation 3 & 4- Ashdown Extra-Care Area
cale 1:50



Relevant Planning History:

The complex of health buildings including this site was approved and built out in the 2000's. There has been a variety of applications for the buildings in this area,

particularly related to the Old Manor residential development complex. None are of particular relevance given the small scale of this proposal.

POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 2 Achieving Sustainable Development

Section 11 Making Effective Use of Land

Section 12 Achieving Well Designed Places

Section 16 Heritage

Wiltshire Core Strategy

Core Policy 1 Settlement Strategy

Core Policy 2 Delivery Strategy

Core Policy 3 Community Infrastructure

Core Policy 24 New Forest

Core Policy 46 Needs of older people

Core Policy 50 and 52 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Core Policy 57 Ensuring high quality design and place shaping

Core Policy 58 Heritage assets

Core Policy 61 Transport and Development

Core Policy 69 River Avon SAC

Saved policy E6 Appendix D of the WCS/SDLP

Salisbury Neighbourhood Plan, particularly policies as below:

- Policy 6 – Design in the built environment
- Policy 10 – Safeguarding and enhancing green and blue infrastructure
- Policy 11 – Biodiversity net gain
- Policy 17 – Healthcare facilities
- Policy 21 – Sustainable Transport

Supplementary Planning Documents:

Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2015-2026: Car Parking and Cycling Strategy

Creating Places Design Guide SPD (April 2006)

National Design Guide 2021

Wiltshire Design Guide 2024

Old Manor Hospital Development Brief

ISSUES

- Principle of health-related development
- Design, scale and amenity impacts/impact on CA and heritage assets
- Highway safety/parking;
- Ecological Impact and BNG
- Flooding

CONSULTATIONS/REPRESENTATIONS

Salisbury City Council – Support

WC Highways – No objection

WC Public Protection – None received

WC Ecology – No objections, subject to the standard BNG condition

Third party representations – None received

ASSESSMENT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. In accordance with this statutory requirement, this application has been assessed against the relevant policies of the Development Plan, including the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and, where applicable, any made Neighbourhood Plans.

Principle of development

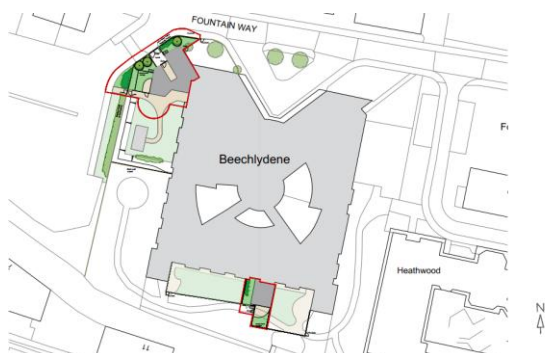
Core Policies CP1 (Settlement Strategy) and CP2 (Delivery Strategy) form the settlement strategy for the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS). CP3 and the associated Strategic Objective 6 of the WCS ensures that infrastructure is in place to support communities, and supports the provision of health-related facilities, as does CP46. The general policies of the NPPF also encourage such health-related uses, including Section 8.

CP57 and CP58 are relevant given the proximity of the CA and heritage assets, and the guidance and policies within the NPPF regards these matters.

Saved policy E6 Appendix D of the WCS/SDLP allocates the wider site/area and states that office development will be permitted at the site as part of a mixed development. The site is also subject to the Old Manor Hospital Development Brief. The existing building on the site and those adjacent to the east are now some 25 years old and built out in accordance with the saved policies and development brief.

In general terms, this area has historically been used for health-related businesses and facilities, and the expansion of such facilities is supported by the policies above, subject to the impact of those works on the heritage assets and other receptors, as outlined below.

Design, scale and amenity impacts including the impact on the CA and heritage assets.



The revised NPPF puts greater emphasis on the need for good design. Paragraph 135 sets out that developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area; demonstrate good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; be sympathetic to local character; and establish a sense of place. It states at Paragraph 139 that development that is not well designed should be refused.

This reflects the approach in Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and paragraphs 212–221 of the NPPF.

Section 66 requires planning authorities in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects the setting of a listed building to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting and Section 72 places a duty on the local planning authority to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

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.

Core Policy 58 relates to the protection of heritage assets as does section 16 of the NPPF.

At a local level, WCS policy CP57 (Ensuring High Quality Design & Place Shaping), further requires a high standard of design in all new developments through, in particular, enhancing local distinctiveness; retaining and enhancing existing important landscaping and natural features; being sympathetic to and conserving historic buildings and landscapes in terms of layouts, massing, building heights and plot sizes; and making efficient use of land whilst taking into account the local context and surrounding uses.

Core Policy 57 also requires that development should ensure the impact on the amenities of existing occupants is acceptable, and ensuring that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself, and the NPPF (paragraph 135f) states that planning decisions should 'create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.'

The applicants statement confirms the ethos and reasoning of the design:

A need for Extra Care provision at the Site has been identified to support service requirements.

As such, Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust ('AWP') are proposing to construct two single storey extensions to the existing Beechlydene Ward and Ashdown Unit to enable these Extra Care services and provide specialist space for service users who may require care and treatment away from the main ward/unit area. The Beechlydene Ward is located to the rear of the building on the southern elevation and Ashdown Unit is located on the northern elevation of the building

- *2 no. single-storey extensions comprising the construction of a 110m² single storey extension to the existing Ashdown Unit on the north-eastern elevation of the building and a 40m² single storey extension to the Beechlydene Unit on the southern elevation of the building;*
- *Associated hard and soft landscaping external works including fencing to match existing (for patient privacy and safety), and the provision of garden areas associated with each extension;*
- *Internal alterations to create connections between the existing building and proposed extensions; and*
- *Incorporation of habitat enhancement to contribute towards biodiversity net gain (26.35%).*

*The existing Beechlydene Unit currently has 21 beds within its acute mental health ward and the Ashdown Unit currently has 6 beds within its Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU). AWP intend to create 3no. bedrooms with associated living/clinical space. However, with the loss of 1no existing bedroom (Beechlydene facility incorporates an existing bedroom), and the additional bedrooms providing alternative specialist space for people already on the ward, **the facilities will not result in an increase in service users on the site.**(Officer emphasis)*

The existing boundary treatments around existing garden areas and a grass verge to the north-east corner of the site will be reorientated and new boundary treatments (including brick walling and fencing) to match existing will be introduced to create outdoor spaces directly linked to the new bedrooms. The proposed garden areas will provide valuable, safe outdoor space for both staff and people using the service, maintaining opportunities for relaxation and quiet reflection separate to the clinical environment. Access to green space has been consistently linked with improved mental health outcomes². The garden space will therefore function as an important wellbeing asset for all users of the Site as well as contributing to ecology and BNG enhancements on site through the introduction of shrub, individual trees and modified grassland.

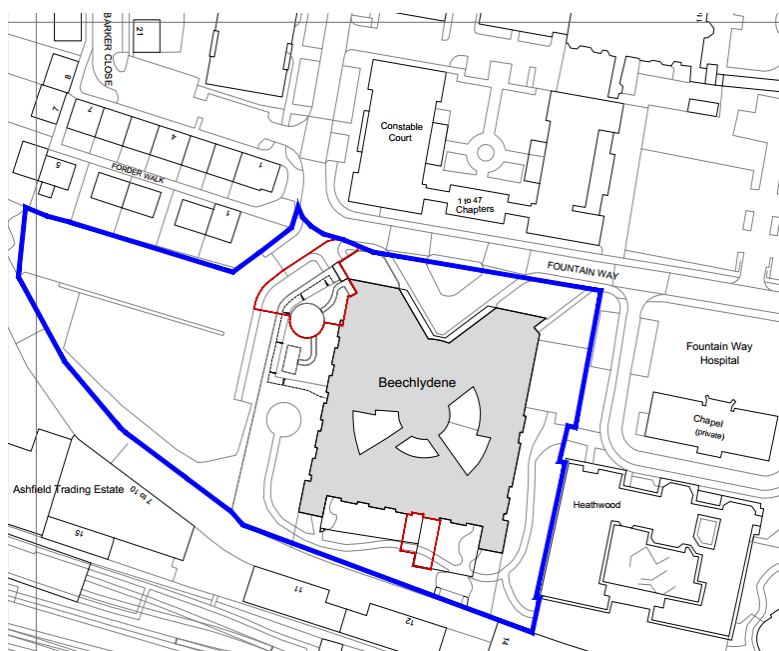
In this case, the proposed extension is small scale, and confined to the existing footprint of the existing site, and some distance from the listed buildings, which are visually screened from this proposal site by the more modern works on the northern Old Manor site. They will have a minimal impact on the character and appearance of the modern health building itself, and thus, consequentially, have a similarly neutral impact on the wider area, conservation area or the character and setting of the heritage assets, which is characterised by modern buildings already, the surrounding area having been largely redeveloped over the last 20 years or so. The site is also somewhat visually divorced from the listed railway station complex to the southeast.

The design, scale and massing of the proposed buildings as outlined within the report and are considered to be acceptable. The proposals would cause no harm to the character of the heritage assets or their setting. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the aims of the NPPF and WCS policies on design and heritage, as referred to elsewhere in this report.

Residential Amenity

The NPPF (para 135) states that planning decisions should ensure developments create safe, inclusive and accessible places that promote health, wellbeing and high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Policy CP57 (Ensuring high quality design and place shaping) of the WCS includes a requirement that development should ensure a high standard of amenity for existing occupants (point vii). This includes safeguarding privacy, outlook, natural light, and protection from noise, disturbance, and overbearing effects.



Plan showing proximity to adjacent uses

Whilst to the immediate north is a residential complex of buildings, this site is separated from that area by the access road. The extension is also small scale, and very subservient to the existing health building. Given this divorced relationship, it is considered that there would be no impacts on adjacent amenity in terms of privacy overlooking or overshadowing or dominance. There have been no third-party objections to the proposal.

The proposal therefore accords with policy CP57 and the NPPF.

Highway safety/parking

Policies CP57, CP60 to CP64 set the transport and accessibility framework for development in Wiltshire. Proposals must provide safe and suitable access for all users and should not have a severe impact on the transport network. CP64 seeks to ensure compliance with parking standards set out in the Local Transport Plan.

The site benefits from an existing access/egress obtained from the A36 public highway and this access/egress is unaltered by this proposal. The proposal is small scale and is unlikely to result in any significant increase in traffic.

The applicants statement explains that:

As the single-storey extensions are proposed to the existing mental health facilities, no additional bin storage, cycle storage or parking facilities are proposed as part of this application. The development has been carefully designed to utilise the existing on-site facilities, which are considered sufficient to meet the ongoing operational needs of the service. The proposed extensions are modest in scale, and there is no change in service user or staff numbers so no change in demand for waste storage, cycling provision, or vehicle parking. Additionally, the Site benefits from excellent sustainable transport links including via bus and train, and as a result, the existing parking arrangements are considered to provide sufficient provision for the proposed extensions.

The Council's Highways Officer has assessed this proposal and has no objection to this scheme. On the basis of the above and the comments received from the Highways Officer, the proposal is unlikely to have any adverse impact on highway safety or highway users that would warrant the refusal of planning permission.

The proposal therefore accords with the aims of CP57 and CP61 WCS.

Ecological and flooding Impact

CP50 and CP52 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework require that the planning authority ensures protection of important habitats and species in relation to development and seeks enhancement for the benefit of biodiversity through the planning system. It will therefore be necessary to assess the site for its potential to support habitats and species of importance to nature conservation.

The site is located within the Hampshire River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Catchment. The proposed development site also lies within the 13.8km zone of influence for the New Forest internationally protected sites, which comprises the New Forest SPA, New Forest SAC and New Forest Ramsar site. Core Policy 69 seeks to ensure the protection of the River Avon SAC, and CP24 protects the New Forest.

However, given its small scale and no increase in units, the proposal has been screened out of an Appropriate assessment, as it has no significant effects on the SPA and SAC.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) this application is required to deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The Biodiversity Gain Plan condition will automatically apply if approval is forthcoming.

A completed statutory metric calculation (24 March 2026. V1) confirming the baseline and predicted post development biodiversity units of the site has been submitted (including the condition assessment sheets and maps).

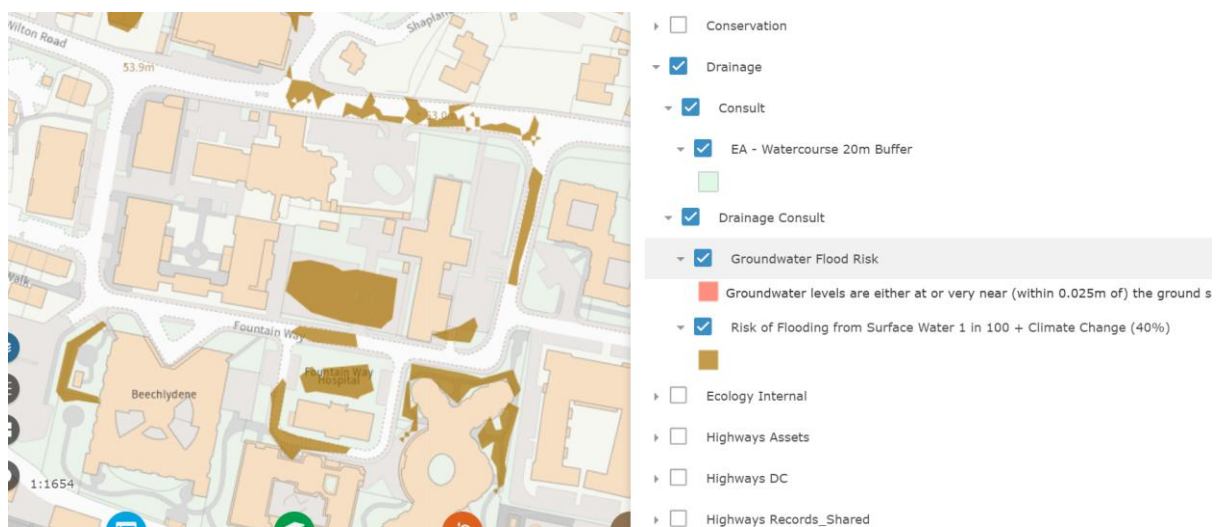
The Council's ecologist has concluded that given the small scale nature of the proposal, BNG provision can be dealt with by way of the standard BNG condition, which is imposed on such

consents by the relevant legislation.

Flooding

Policy CP67 aligns with national policy (NPPF, para 170-182) and requires that development avoids increasing flood risk on-site or elsewhere.

The Environment Agency (EA) has a strategic overview of all sources of flooding and is responsible for designating flood zones and is also responsible for flood and risk management activities on main rivers and is a consultee on relevant planning applications. There are 3 zones in total across the country. The EA flood maps identify the site being in Flood Zone 1. Flood Zone 1 has the lowest flood risk and shows the area that could be affected by flooding from a river by a flood that has a 1 per cent (1 in 100) or greater chance of happening each year.



The site is small scale, and in flood zone 1. It is an existing and historic urban site bounded by other historic development, including the main train line to the south. The extensions are of very modest footprint and do not increase the habitable rooms on the site. It is not located near a watercourse (which is located some distance south of the adjacent railway line). The wider area has not been subject of a flood event, and no significant flooding related issues have arisen on recent planning applications.

This Council's flooding data seems to suggest some localised chance of surface water flooding, as per the map above. However, the same map also shows some areas of flooding along part of the A36, the Fountain Way access road, and within some of the complex to the east and north. It is not known to what extent this mapping is accurate, particularly given the unusual areas of flooding of the main A36 road, which is not known for its history of such flooding, as indeed is the main private access road to the site. Officers have not given this information any significant weight in the consideration of this proposal given the lack of any actual recorded flooding of these areas since the area was developed some 20 years ago. Notwithstanding, it is likely that any such problem that may arise would be able to be resolved by the Building Regulations regime.

As a result, it is considered that the proposals are unlikely to be subject to a significant flood

event and will not take up floodplain storage. As a result, it is considered that the proposal would accord with policy CP67 of the WCS, and the NPPF.

Conclusion and planning balance

The provision and enhancement of community use such as health-related facilities is supported by national and local planning policies and guidance. The extension of this facility therefore accords with those policies, carrying significant weight in the overall balance.

The small scale and design of the extensions and works is considered to be appropriate for the site and would not result in any detrimental implications for the character of the area and the adjacent CA or heritage assets; highway safety; neighbouring amenities; or ecological impacts. This limited harm thus also carries significant weight.

Therefore, for the reasons as outlined within the report, officers are of the opinion that the proposed development conforms to the objectives of Core Policies CP1, 2 and 3, CP24, CP46, 57, CP58, CP61, 69 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, including saved policy E6 and the Old Manor Development brief, and the aims of the NPPF. Therefore, planning permission should be granted for the development.

RECOMMENDATION: That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

020 Proposed Site plan received 30/04/26
005 Site Location plan received 30/04/26
010 Existing site plan received 30/04/26
210 Proposed Beechlydene Elevations 1-2-3 received 16/04/26
111 Proposed Ashdown West & South elevations 3-4 received 16/04/26
201 Proposed Beechlydene GA Plan received 16/04/26
030 Proposed floor and section plan received 16/04/26
101 Proposed Ashdown GA plan received 16/04/26
029 Existing floor plan received 16/04/26
109 Existing elevations received 16/04/26
110 Proposed Ashdown East & North elevations 1-2 received 16/04/26

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

INFORMATIVE TO APPLICANT(S):

1. BNG

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless:

(a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and

(b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan, if one is required in respect of this permission would be Wiltshire Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun.

2. Protected species

The applicant should note that under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) it is an offence to disturb or harm any protected species including for example, breeding birds and reptiles. The protection offered to some species such as bats, extends beyond the individual animals to the places they use for shelter or resting. Please note that this consent does not override the statutory protection afforded to any such species. In the event that your proposals could potentially affect a protected species you should seek the advice of a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist and consider the need for a licence from Natural England prior to commencing works. Please see Natural England's website for further information on protected species.

3. Highways

The applicant is advised that consideration should be given to the provision of dropped kerb pedestrian crossing points on the northwestern and southeastern sides of the car park access road, in order to improve accessibility and facilitate pedestrian movements within the site.