

Patron: His Majesty the King

20 July 2026

For attn Case Officer Mr Jonathan James

CPRE Wiltshire
Gardeners Cottage
The Courtyard
Poulshot Road
Poulshot Devizes
Wiltshire SN10 1RW
Tel: 01380722157
admin@cprewiltshire.org.uk
www.cprewiltshire.org.uk

Dear Jonathan

Site: Cannings Hill Garage, London Road/Horton Road, Devizes, SN10 2JG

Proposals: Demolition of existing buildings. The erection of a freestanding restaurant/takeaway with drive thru facility, car parking, landscaping and associated works, including Customer Order Displays

Linked Applications under Consideration:

1. **PL/2026/03683:** Full Planning Permission (Demolition of existing garage buildings and erection of a freestanding 24hr drive-through restaurant/takeaway)
2. **PL/2026/03702:** Advertisement Consent (Installation of internally illuminated signage: 4 no. fascia signs, 3 no. booth lettering, 1 no. digital booth screen, and 4 no. yellow soffit lights)
3. **PL/2026/03737:** Advertisement Consent (Erection of an 8-metre internally illuminated totem sign)
4. **PL/2026/03738:** Advertisement Consent (Various site signage: 4 no. freestanding signs, 1 no. banner unit, 1 no. playland sign, and 17 no. dot signs)

CPRE Wiltshire does not object in principle to developments that introduce valuable youth employment and economic investment to Devizes. However, any such benefits must be carefully weighed against the severe environmental and community impacts of the specific location chosen.

In this instance, the proximity of a 24-hour fast-food outlet to nearby residential homes, the highly intrusive nature of the associated 24-hour commercial signage and lighting, and major outstanding highway safety concerns weigh heavily against the proposals. CPRE Wiltshire therefore strongly objects to the core planning application (**PL/2026/03683**) and its three linked advertisement consent applications (**PL/2026/03702**, **PL/2026/03737**, and **PL/2026/03738**) and urges Wiltshire Council to refuse permission across all four.

While we acknowledge that the Cannings Hill site is a brownfield location—which CPRE generally prefers to see developed over greenfield land—the scale and nature of a 24-hour drive-through facility represents an unacceptable change of use. Wiltshire Council has previously rejected similar edge-of-town McDonald's proposals at Trowbridge (2019) and Hilperton (PL/2023/05469) due to light

pollution, dark sky impacts, and traffic conflicts. The same unresolved material planning issues apply directly to this site.

Objections

1. Landscape, Visual Intrusion, and Light Pollution

(Applications: PL/2026/03702, PL/2026/03737, & PL/2026/03738)

The site sits immediately adjacent to the edge of Devizes and is approximately 400 metres from the boundary of the **North Wessex Downs National Landscape** (formerly AONB).

- a. Devizes is a historic Wiltshire market town bordering a protected national landscape, not the Las Vegas Strip. The introduction of a towering 8-metre internally illuminated totem sign (PL/2026/03737) alongside extensive digital booth and soffit lighting (PL/2026/03702) is a garish, urban over-development. It will introduce a harsh, industrial light footprint into a highly sensitive rural fringe, directly violating **Wiltshire Core Strategy Core Policy 51** (Landscape), which mandates that developments must protect and enhance landscape character.
- b. The North Wessex Downs operates under a strict Dark Skies policy. A round-the-clock illuminated commercial operation will cause significant "sky glow". This completely undermines recent landscape conservation efforts, such as the costly undergrounding of nearby power pylons specifically undertaken to minimize structural and light impacts on the National Landscape.
- c. The intense glow from the combined signage across all three advertisement applications will directly impact residential properties on Horton Road, London Road, and the Laywood Estate.

2. Residential Amenity (Noise, Odour, and Disturbance)

(Application: PL/2026/03683)

The proximity of this site to residential housing creates a direct conflict with **Wiltshire Core Policy 57** (Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping).

- d. Unlike the Hilperton site, residential properties here (specifically those across the road by the roundabout) are located in immediate proximity to the proposed development. Introducing a 24-hour drive-through will subject these residents to continuous nighttime noise from idling engines, car doors slamming, stereos, and outdoor Customer Order Display speakers.
- e. Commercial-scale fast-food extraction systems emit persistent cooking odours. The constant output of grease and smell will significantly degrade the living conditions of nearby residents.
- f. While the site currently hosts a garage and car wash, the intensity, noise, and environmental footprint of a 24-hour fast-food restaurant are vastly greater than those of a conventional garage.

3. Highway Safety, Access, and Cumulative Impact

(Application: PL/2026/03683)

The site is positioned directly off the heavily congested A361/Horton Road roundabout.

- g. Drive-through restaurants experience intense peak periods. If the internal queuing lanes back up, traffic will immediately spill backward onto Horton Road, creating an acute highway safety hazard on a primary arterial route.

- h. The drive-through will naturally attract high numbers of pedestrian visitors, particularly teenagers. The lack of safe, dedicated pedestrian crossing points across these high-speed roundabout approaches violates **Core Policy 61 (Transport and Development)**.
- i. The London Road corridor is already prone to severe traffic congestion as the sole eastern access point to Devizes. This bottleneck will be significantly exacerbated by this proposal—especially when viewed alongside the cumulative impact of other retail schemes being promoted nearby (such as the proposed Aldi and Tesco schemes).

4. Ecology, Biodiversity, and Protected Species

(Applications: PL/2026/03683, PL/2026/03702, PL/2026/03737, & PL/2026/03738)

- j. Local records indicate active bat populations in the immediate neighbourhood. Because bats are a European Protected Species protected under the UK Habitat Regulations, demolition of the existing structures cannot lawfully proceed without comprehensive, up-to-date emergence surveys.
- k. The proposed 24-hour illumination from the 8-metre totem pole (**PL/2026/03737**), the digital menu boards, and site-wide lighting (**PL/2026/03702 & PL/2026/03738**) will act as a physical "light barrier," severing local bat commuting and foraging corridors. This directly violates **Wiltshire Core Policy 50 (Biodiversity and Geology)**.

5. Conflict with the Devizes Area Neighbourhood Plan (DANP)

- l. The DANP heavily prioritizes protecting the historic town centre's unique character and economic vitality. Diverting major food and drink footfall to the far periphery of the town draws trade away from independent town-centre businesses.

3. Conclusion

The proposed Cannings Hill site is fundamentally unsuitable for a 24-hour drive-through restaurant. Its severe impact on the adjacent North Wessex Downs National Landscape and its close proximity to residential homes make this scheme even more objectionable than the refused Hilperton application.

CPRE Wiltshire urges Wiltshire Council to refuse these four linked applications (**PL/2026/03683**, **PL/2026/03702**, **PL/2026/03737**, and **PL/2026/03738**). We further request that the Council conduct an urgent assessment of more suitable, alternative retail locations closer to the town centre that would better preserve the economic health and character of Devizes.

Yours sincerely

Anne Henshaw

cc Councillor Martin - Chair Devizes Town Council Planning and Development Committee

cc Councillor Laura Mayes - Councillor for Bromham, Rowde and Roundway, Devizes

cc Councillor Philip Whitehead - Councillor for Urchfont and Bishops Cannings