

Planning Department
Wiltshire Council
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
BA14 8JN

16 July 2026
Our Ref. W2762

Re: Planning Application for minor alterations to the design of the main entrance gates at Conholt Park, Conholt Lane, Conholt, Andover, SP11 9HA

INTRODUCTION

This Cover Letter is submitted on behalf of the applicant, Conholt Nominees Limited, to support a planning application seeking minor amendments to the main entrance gates at Conholt Park.

THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site is located within Chute Civil Parish, on the eastern border of Wiltshire and within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. There is no Neighbourhood Plan for the area although there is a Parish Design Guide, and the primary Development Plan Document is Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy (2015). It is outside any Settlement Boundary and within the countryside for planning policy purposes.

The application site falls within Conholt Park, located off Hungerford Lane. The main house of Conholt Park is 6 miles north-northwest of Andover, 6.5 miles northeast of Tidworth, 12 miles southwest of Newbury and 12 miles southeast of Marlborough. An intricate network of rural lanes winds across the area and there are few main roads; Chute Forest retains a tranquil rural character despite its proximity to Andover and Tidworth.

The application site comprises a small parcel of land located approximately 700m south of the main house and includes the main gates and entry into the estate, accessed off Hungerford Lane. The application site is edged with a red line as shown in figure 1, inclusive of the means of access to the public highway.

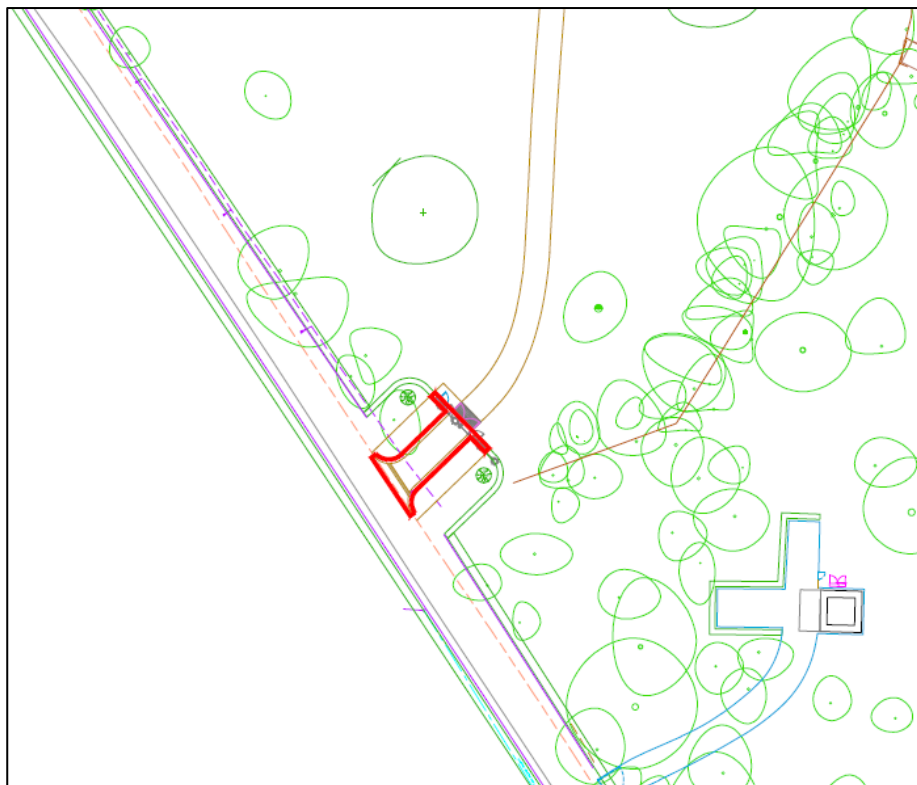


Figure 1: Red Line Boundary including access to the public highway

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The main gates have been subject to three historic applications, all of which have been approved. These include:

- **PL/2024/02281** – FULL APPLICATION - Fourth phase of proposals for the restoration of the designed landscape of Front Park – Approved 10/07/2024 (gate details were required to be discharged pending resolution of the final design)
- **PL/2024/10026** – S73 APPLICATION - Variation of condition 2 (Approved Plans) of PL/2024/02281 - To facilitate design changes to the main entrance gates – Approved 18/12/2024
- **PL/2025/01412** – DOC APPLICATION - Discharge of condition 18 of PL/2024/10026 (entrance gate details and specifications) – These captured changes to the ironwork detailing. Approved 5 March 2025

This full application seeks consent for minor amendments to the design of the existing main entrance gates at Conholt Park. The proposed changes comprise revisions to the decorative iron scrollwork above both the main vehicular gates and the adjoining pedestrian gates.

The proposed amendments are limited in scope and, in our professional opinion, do not result in any material change to the overall scale, appearance or function of the entrance gates. While the revised decorative scrolls introduce an increase in height, this increase relates only to the central gate and does not materially alter the overall appearance of the

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gate structure. The gates, gate piers and associated entrance arrangement remain unchanged in width, position and alignment, with no relocation or alteration to the principal form of the entrance.

POLICY CONTEXT

Core policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to protect, conserve and, where possible, enhance landscape character. Proposals should be informed by landscape assessments and must safeguard key features such as natural elements, settlement character, views, tranquillity, heritage assets and the special qualities of designated landscapes (especially National Landscapes and the New Forest National Park). Where development affects these areas or their setting, it must demonstrate that it will not harm their landscape qualities and that any unavoidable impacts are sensitively mitigated.

Core policy 57 of the Core Strategy requires all development to achieve a high standard of design that responds positively to local character and creates a strong sense of place. Proposals must respect natural and historic features, integrate well with existing landscape, protect amenity, and use high-quality materials. Development should maximise sustainability, retain important landscaping, ensure safe and attractive public spaces, reduce opportunities for crime, and demonstrate how it fits within its context.

Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires that designated heritage assets and their settings are conserved, and where possible enhanced, in a manner appropriate to their significance. The policy encourages proposals that improve the condition of heritage assets at risk and expects development to be informed by relevant heritage advice and assessments.

PLANNING APPRAISAL

The principle of upgrading the main entrance gates at Conholt Park has been firmly established through three historic applications approved by Wiltshire Council. These include the comprehensive landscape restoration scheme approved under reference PL/2024/02281, the subsequent Section 73 design variation under PL/2024/10026, and the discharge of condition application capturing detailed ironwork specifications under PL/2025/01412. The amendments proposed within this application represent a minor design refinement to this approved entrance scheme that will not result in any material change to the overall scale, appearance or function of the gates.

The proposed revisions are strictly aesthetic and limited in scope, focusing on refined decorative iron scrollwork above both the main vehicular gates and adjoining pedestrian gates.

Although the revised decorative ironwork would result in an overall height increase of approximately 700mm, this increase is confined to the uppermost decorative element of the central vehicular gate and does not affect the gate piers, pedestrian gates, footprint, width or alignment of the entrance. The gates are also set back approximately 12 metres

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from Hungerford Lane, so the additional height would be perceived within the context of the existing estate entrance rather than as a materially more prominent feature in the street scene. On that basis, the change would not materially alter the scale, appearance or visual impact of the approved gateway. The proposals therefore safeguard the special qualities of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape and demonstrate compliance with Core Policy 51.

By utilising traditional, high-quality materials and craftsmanship that respect the historic landscape, the proposals achieve the high standard of design required by Core Policy 57. The gates, gate piers and associated entrance arrangement remain entirely unchanged in width, position and alignment. This ensures that the principal form of the entrance is preserved and integrates seamlessly with its immediate context without negatively impacting local amenity.

The entrance gates are situated approximately 700 metres from the principal listed house and therefore form part of the wider setting of the heritage asset rather than its immediate setting. Owing to this separation distance, the contribution of the gates to the significance of the listed building is derived principally from their role as an estate feature marking arrival to the historic parkland, rather than through any direct visual or physical relationship with the house itself.

The revised ironwork introduces a more refined and coherent decorative treatment that is sympathetic to the character of a traditional country estate entrance. Importantly, the proposals do not result in the loss of historic fabric, nor do they alter any aspect of the heritage asset that contributes to its significance. The overall appearance, function, and character of the approved gates remain unchanged, with the amendments limited to matters of detailing. As such, the proposals preserve the significance of the listed building and its setting.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN EXEMPTION STATEMENT

Under Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Environment Act 2021) and the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, the proposed development is exempt from the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirement. The application meets the criteria for exemption under the De Minimis (Small Sites) Exemption for the following reasons:

- **No Loss or Degradation of On-Site Priority Habitat:** The development does not cause impact to, or result in the loss of, any priority habitat as defined under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.
- **Minimal Physical Impact:** The development involves minor design alterations to an existing gate structure set within an established hard-surfaced entrance/driveway area.
- **Threshold Criteria:** The proposed works do not impact more than 25 square metres of non-priority habitat, nor do they impact more than 5 metres of linear habitat (e.g., hedgerows).

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Account has been taken of statutory anti-degradation rules under Schedule 7A, which require unauthorized habitat degradation occurring after 30 January 2020 to be evaluated against the pre-degradation baseline. Even if assessed against the historical baseline condition prior to recent entrance works (when the land functioned as an agricultural field opening), the total physical footprint of the gate structures and ground works falling within this application remains strictly below the statutory 25 sqm / 5m de minimis thresholds.

As the development qualifies under statutory exemption provisions, the submission of a Biodiversity Gain Plan or BNG Metric Calculation is not required to determine this planning application.

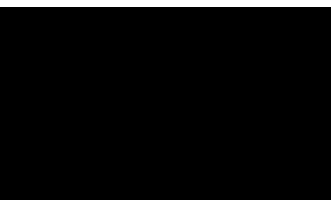
CONCLUSION

The principle, location, scale and function of the entrance have already been established through previous planning permissions, and the current proposals do not alter the approved footprint, alignment, width or overall character of the gateway.

The revised detailing has been carefully designed to complement the historic estate character, utilising traditional forms, materials and craftsmanship that enhance the quality and appearance of the entrance without resulting in any material increase in visual prominence. The proposals will preserve the rural character of the surrounding landscape, safeguard the special qualities of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, and have no adverse impact on important views or landscape features.

By introducing higher-quality decorative detailing that is more in keeping with the character and status of the historic estate, the proposals result in a subtle enhancement to the appearance of the entrance and consequently to the experience and appreciation of the heritage asset within its wider landscape setting.

Yours sincerely,



Luke Smith
Associate Director

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