

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

Application No: PL/2026/02567 (LBC) & PL/2026/02050 (PP)
Address: Highclere House, Kingston Road, Shalbourne
Case Officer: Hannah Brown

Please find following comments in respect of the above consultation:

Recommendations:

☐	No Comment
☐	Comment
☐	Support
☐	Support subject to conditions (please set out below)
☒	Object (for reasons set out below)
☐	No objections

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

National Policy and Guidance:

Section 16 & 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 – requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 – requirement to pay special attention to the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the surrounding Conservation Area.

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024 (as amended February 2025)) outlines government policy, including the historic environment (Section 16). Paragraph 210 requires local planning authorities to 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. Paragraphs 214 – 216 require a balanced approach with any harm which would be caused being weighed against the potential public benefits which might be achieved. National Planning Policy Guidance provides guidance on making changes to Heritage Assets.

Historic England's "Conservation Principles" provides policy and guidance for the "sustainable management of the historic environment". Additional guidance is also contained within their publications:

- *Historic Environment Good Practice Planning Advice Note 2 – Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment*
- *Historic Environment Good Practice Planning Advice Note 3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets (2nd edition)*

Local Policy:

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.

Wiltshire 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."

Site:

Highclere House is a grade II listed building dating from the 17th century. The house is a traditional vernacular building, being brick and timber framed under a combed wheat reed thatched roof, it is a fine example of the local traditional architecture that positively contributes to the character and appearance of the Shalbourne Conservation Area.

The list entry, for means of identification purposes only, provides the following description:

House. C17. Timber framed and brickwork. Thatched roof. Single- storey and attic. Three bays, lobby entry plan. Boarded door opposite stack between bays 1 and 2. Bay 1 rebuilt or refaced in C18 diaper brick with plat band. Heavy framing with corner braces to upper floor of bays 2 and 3, brick below. Two-light timber casement windows, segmental heads to ground floor. Thatch half- hipped right and carried low over lean-to left. Lean-to bathroom to rear.

Its significance lies in its vernacular form and materials, spanning three bays with baffled lobby entrance before the main chimney stack, off centre. Traditional cottage detailing such as brick arched window lintels with brick cills, which are paired between the ground and first floor, the external character is a key element to its overall significance. Internally, the floorplan is a typical cellular plan, one room deep of regular proportions, dictated by the length of timber available to construct the timber frame.

Proposal:

Construction of single-storey kitchen extension and demolition of greenhouse room, replaced with single storey extension.

Issues:

- Impact upon the preservation of the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural and/or historic interest.
- Impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and its setting.

Assessment:

N.B. The plans do not have a North point, which is required – this should have been picked up at registration stage, before the application was validated.

The application covers three elements – demolition of an existing lean-to greenhouse and erection of two extensions.

In relation to the proposed demolition, the existing greenhouse is a simple timber and glass structure on a brick plinth, having been approved in 2016. This replaced a similar greenhouse in this location, albeit being increased in size along of the gable to be approximately double in depth, to run the length of the gable wall. As the greenhouse is modern, and replaced a modern structure, it has not reinstated an historic element, there is no historic or architectural importance to the structure. Therefore its demolition will not harm the building's significance, and there are no concerns about its removal.

With regard to extensions/additions to all heritage assets, including listed buildings, Historic England have the following advice (HE Advice Note 2):

Point 41: The main issues to consider in proposals for additions to heritage assets, including new development in conservation areas, aside from NPPF requirements such as social and economic activity and sustainability, are proportion, height,

massing, bulk, use of materials, durability and adaptability, use, enclosure, relationship with adjacent assets and definition of spaces and streets, alignment, active frontages, permeability and treatment of setting. Replicating a particular style may be less important, though there are circumstances when it may be appropriate. It would not normally be good practice for new work to dominate the original asset or its setting in either scale, material or as a result of its siting. Assessment of an asset's significance and its relationship to its setting will usually suggest the forms of extension that might be appropriate.

The listed building benefits from a relatively recent rear extension, approved in 1990, which significantly increased the size of the cottage. It is a well-designed extension that forms a rear wing, being positioned at right-angles to the main cottage, which is quite a typical and traditional approach to extending such a building. Its design, to fit in with the existing cottage, and its siting on the building proffer a degree of subservience which does not detract or harm the significance of the designated heritage asset overall. The size and proportions, both externally and internally in terms of its plan form (room proportions etc), clearly reflect those of the historic cottage: the historic plan form and cottage character are key elements to the building's significance.

Gable extension – whilst there are no concerns over the demolition of the greenhouse on this elevation, there are concerns over the proposed extension to replace it. This is a single storey extension with double-pitched/apex roof, extending 3.3 metres. The elevations have not been stepped in from the main elevation (which can aid subservience), and the ridge height is overly tall, resulting in an addition which is not considered to be subservient to the historic cottage. The roof is particularly dominant, not helped by it being 'face-on' when viewed from the front. It is far too deep and high and does not respect the more cottage character of this vernacular building, being more visually prominent. The height of it also obscures historic external brickwork, internalising it within the extension, causing additional physical harm by means of its attachment. The extension is considered to cause harm to the building's significance, and is therefore unacceptable addition at this gable end.

Rear extension – the proposed extension spans from the modern rear extension, so does not cause physical harm to the building's fabric. However, it breaks from traditional and traditionally-inspired planforms, by returning across the rear elevation, in parallel to it. The existing modern extension is well-designed and executed, yet this addition is an awkward return across the historic rear elevation. From a practical sense, there is likely to be an increase in weathering on timber frame due to wind movement causing 'wind swirl' by wind swirling in the resultant gap between the masonry elevation and the glazed addition. This could have a knock-on effect on the functionality of the thatched roof, causing an increased damp area due to impeded ground drainage and vapour permeability of the masonry. Again, this proposed extension is an awkward addition, which does not respect the architectural qualities or features of significance (such as planform) that positively contribute to this building's special interest, causing it harm as it is inappropriate and unsympathetic development.

There will become a point where additional extension will no longer be considered acceptable to a listed building, as it has already been extended to its maximum that does not affect its overall significance: this is clearly the case with this building, as it already benefits from a large rear extension, which essentially doubles the amount of living accommodation. Increasing it further is not considered to preserve its character or proportions of this vernacular building, and are awkward additions to it, which are not subservient. Subservience is not limited to size, but overall impact on the building, and additional extensions are likely to cause harm to the building's significance. This harm is identified as less-than-substantial, however this is still harm, which requires full justification.

The NPPF requires public benefits to be considered where less-than-substantial harm is identified (p.215) – there are no public benefits from the proposals, only private benefits. The building already appears to be performing at its optimal viability and whilst the additions are desired, there is no evidence to suggest that continued use of this building is under threat without the additional extensions. Therefore there is no justification for the extensions in relation to viability as a dwelling house.

Whilst there is harm caused by the current proposals, there could be some scope to replace the lean-to greenhouse with a well-designed, more traditional lean-to extension, with more permanence than the greenhouse i.e. masonry, taking influence from the historic lean-to on the opposite gable end, but reduced in height and depth quite significantly, along with being stepped in to aid subservience, and it is advised that this is considered as a potential option to provide the additional space for the desired study. If this is appropriately designed and scaled to respect the form and character of the historic cottage, this could be an acceptable solution that allows some increase to the overall accommodation, whilst preserving significance.

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.

In this case, the proposals will result in harm to the building via the negative impact caused by the accumulation of modern extensions to this traditional building, their inappropriate size, form and design failing to respect the character and proportions of this historic vernacular building. The proposed extensions are not considered subservient and there are no public benefits to outweigh the harm identified, and the building appears to already function at its optimal viable use.

The proposals are therefore considered to be contrary to current policy and guidance, in particular NPPF paragraphs 212, 213 & 215.

Pippa Card
Senior Conservation Officer
Wiltshire Council Planning

Date: 05/08/2026

Significance of assets and contribution of setting (as appropriate): The NPPF defines significance as the “value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be **archaeological, architectural, artistic** or **historic**. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.” Historic England assesses significance in a similar manner, referring to evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal values of a place.

In this case the significance of the building lies largely with its historic fabric and architecture - its form, layout and architectural expression/detailing and use of high-quality design materials which have significant aesthetic and architectural interest and which contribute to the character of the conservation area. etc

The rear of the building has, however, been compromised by extension and alteration during the modern period and is of lesser interest.

The interior retains a good set of historic joinery

The circulation pattern remains largely unaltered

Assessment: of proposals including their impact on the special interest of the building/conservation area and any harm which will occur via loss of historic fabric, scale, bulk (etc as appropriate). Also any benefits.