Canal & River Trust
Making life better by water

Wiltshire Council
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

Your Ref PL/2026/02943

Our Ref CRTR-PLAN-2026-46818

Tuesday 26 May 2026

Dear Steven Sims,

Proposal: Outline application (with all matters reserved except for access) for the erection of up to 224 residential dwellings (Class C3), 72-bed care home (Class C2), with sports pitch provision, country park, allotments, landscaping and open space

Location: Land off, Trowbridge Road, Bradford on Avon

Waterway: Kennet & Avon Canal

Thank you for your consultation.

We are the charity who look after and bring to life 2000 miles of canals & rivers. Our waterways contribute to the health and wellbeing of local communities and economies, creating attractive and connected places to live, work, volunteer and spend leisure time. These historic, natural and cultural assets form part of the strategic and local green-blue infrastructure network, linking urban and rural communities as well as habitats. By caring for our waterways and promoting their use we believe we can improve the wellbeing of our nation. The Trust is a statutory consultee in the Development Management process.

The main issue relevant to the Trust as statutory consultee on this application is accessibility in relation to the towpath of the Kennet & Avon Canal

This is not our substantive response. However, based on the information available we request that **a legal agreement is necessary** to address the matter below.

Accessibility

Core Policy 61 of the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015 and paragraph 109 of the NPPF require development to promote sustainable transport options.

Furthermore, Core Policy 52 of the Core Strategy requires developers to retain and enhance Wiltshire's Green infrastructure network, provide suitable links to it, and make contributions (financial or other) to support such projects. The canal and towpath are recognised as important, multi-functional Green Infrastructure which provides off-road active travel routes from the site to the town centre and to open countryside for recreational purposes.

The canal towpath is part of the long-distance path network, and parts of it are also part of Sustrans NCR 4. As recognised within the Framework Travel Plan, and illustrated at Figure 3.3, National Cycle Route 4 (NCR4) routes through the southern sections of Bradford-on-Avon via the Kennet & Avon canal path. The route provides a western connection to Bath and Bristol, and an eastern route to Trowbridge and Devizes.

Canal & River Trust Spatial Planning Team
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The BRAD18 footpath which runs through the site provides a connection to the canal path and the proposed access allows easy access to the towpath and BRAD 27.

As identified in the Travel Plan, the towpath provides a convenient route for the future residents of this site to reach local facilities in the southern part of town centre in a sustainable manner, as well as allowing access to open countryside for recreational use. At present access to the towpath can be achieved by travelling east at the canal bridge and then joining, to go either east or west, or by travelling along Moulton Drive.

It is not clear why the towpath has not been included in the Active Travel route assessment. The Trust wish to meet with all relevant parties to discuss potential improvements which could provide improvements to the towpath to ensure it is fit for purpose to cope with the additional usage this development will bring and to ensure it is recognised and used as a Active Trael route.

Therefore, to comply with local and national planning policy, we request that consideration is given to the need for a **S106 contribution to allow suitable access improvements to and along the towpath to be delivered.**

The Trust considers that the principle of this request meets the requirements of the tests for a S106 obligation as set out in paraph 58 of the NPPF and Policy 52 of the adopted Core Strategy. If the applicants are not willing to agree to the principle of a suitable contribution to improve access to the towpath, please advise the Trust to allow further discussions to take place and a substantive response to be provided.

We welcome contact from the applicant and from Wiltshire Council to discuss this further, following which we will provide a substantive response.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any queries you may have.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Hennell MRTPI
Area Planner

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https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/specialist-teams/planning-and-design

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