

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

URBAN DESIGN

Officer name:

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Application No: PL-2026-04078

Proposal: Approval of reserved matters (scale, layout, appearance and landscaping)
pursuant to Outline Planning Permission 21/01004/OUT

Site Address: Lottage Farm, Lottage Road, Aldbourne, Marlborough, SN8 2ED

Case Officer: Audrey Lo

Reference:

Files indexed 11.08.26

Policy and guidance:

- Wiltshire Core Strategy, Core Policy 57 'Ensuring high quality design and place shaping' (Abbreviated CP57)
- Wiltshire Design Guide – Wiltshire Council Supplementary Planning Document adopted 25th March 2024 (abbreviated WDG)
- Aldbourne Neighbourhood Development Plan made March 2023 (abbreviated ANDP)
- National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG December 2024) (abbreviated NPPF)
- National Design Guide (MHCLG January 2021) (abbreviated NDG)
- Building for a Healthy Life (Homes England June 2020) (referenced in the NPPF) (abbreviated BfHL)
- Streets for a Healthy Life: A companion guide to Building for a Healthy Life (Homes England) (abbreviated SFHL)

Note: Proposed update to NPPF expected March 2026 and incorporation of NDG, NMDC Parts 1 & 2, and BfHL/SfHL in a 'Design and Place making Planning Practice Guidance' document (DPPPG) expected shortly also.

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.

The NPPF recognises the role of design review in ensuring high standards of design and we encourage major development proposals to be independently assessed at an early stage in the process. The NPPF indicates "significant weight" is to be given to designs "which help raise the standard of design more generally in an area". The draft NPPF intends to increase this to "substantial weight". Where a project has a design review, we will consider the panel's recommendations in our planning process and decisions. The Council's Urban Design Team can provide further information on this process on request.

Comment

Overall, the scheme is considered to represent an acceptable urban design response to the site. The following comments are offered as constructive recommendations to improve certain aspects of the proposal. Subject to these matters being addressed, the proposal would be acceptable from an urban design perspective.

Layout

I echo the affordable housing officer's comments regarding the location of affordable housing at one end of the site. Whilst the layout successfully integrates the affordable units within the overall street pattern, the grouping of these dwellings at one end of the site risks creating a degree of tenure segregation. Building for a Healthy Life promotes the creation of mixed and inclusive neighbourhoods where affordable housing is tenure blind and integrated throughout developments. It is recommended consideration be given to whether some affordable units could be dispersed more evenly across the site. Furthermore, relocating the maisonettes would help respond to the previous Urban Design comments which recommended positioning apartments closer to the public open space.

Plot 2 does not appear to achieve the 12m minimum garden depth recommended within the Wiltshire Design Guide (paragraph 9.2.2) for north-facing rear gardens. Given the orientation of the plot, adequate garden depth is important to ensure the private amenity space remains usable and receives reasonable levels of sunlight throughout the day. It is therefore recommended that the design of this plot, including the siting and orientation of the dwelling, is reviewed to establish whether a greater garden depth can be achieved in accordance with WDG.

Scale

The scale of development is acceptable and responds appropriately to both the site context and the parameters established through the outline consent. The reserved matters submission proposes 31 dwellings, which is one dwelling fewer than the maximum 32 dwellings approved under outline permission 21/01004/OUT. The scheme comprises predominantly two-storey dwellings, consistent with the requirements of Aldbourne Neighbourhood Plan Policy 26, and reflects the scale and form of surrounding residential development, particularly that found along Lottage Road and within Chandler's Lane. Overall, the proposed scale is compatible with the surrounding built form, respects the transition to the adjoining countryside, and accords with the design objectives established at outline stage.

Landscape

The landscape strategy is a positive aspect of the scheme, providing a strong green framework through the retention and reinforcement of existing hedgerows, native planting and the provision of public open space. This will assist in integrating the development into its village-edge setting and soften its relationship with the surrounding countryside.

The use of a shared surface street is welcomed and should help create a more informal, pedestrian friendly environment and reduce the visual dominance of highway infrastructure. The varied palette of materials and colour tones is also supported, helping to create visual interest and a distinctive sense of place.

Whilst the overall landscape approach is strong, it would be beneficial to explore opportunities for additional street trees. Increased greenery would help further soften the appearance of parked vehicles and hard surfacing, particularly at the southern end of the site. One possible approach could be to locally reduce the highway in places, as can be seen in the scheme below.



Abode, Cambridge by Proctor and Matthews

Boundary treatments fronting public areas are generally proposed as robust masonry walls, which is welcomed and aligns with the recommendations of the Wiltshire Design Guide. To further enhance visual coherence across the development, consideration should be given to tailoring boundary wall materials to reflect the architectural character of the adjacent dwellings. For example, the wall associated with House Type 8 currently appears disconnected visually from the building it serves due to the differing material palette. In this instance, the use of flint and brick detailing within the wall would provide a stronger visual relationship with the dwelling, and contribute to a more cohesive and considered streetscape.

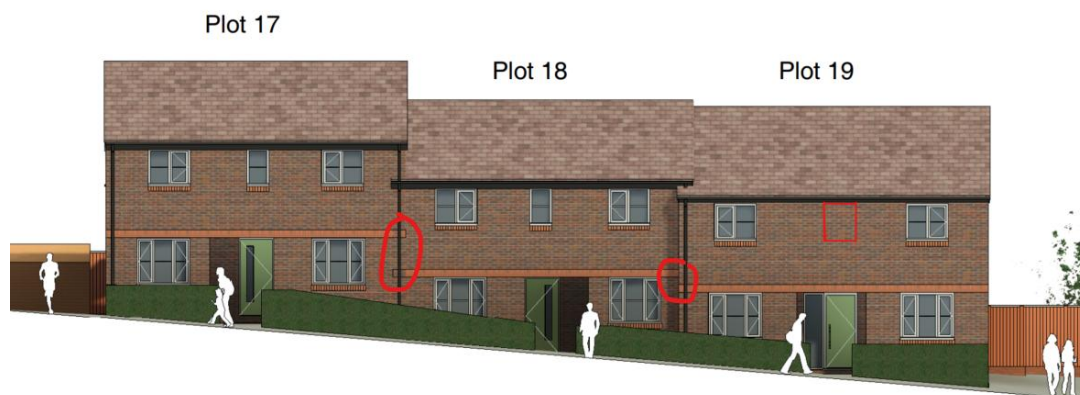


Appearance

The overall appearance is acceptable but there are a few areas noted below which could be enhanced and ensure the scheme is of a high standard to meet CP57.

The material references are welcomed and help to embed the scheme into the Aldbourne context which has a rich and diverse patchwork of materials. This approach, as noted in the compliance statement, helps to ensure that the scheme meets the quality of design required by CP57, notably CP57 iii. The quality of the proposed development is however highly reliant on the quality of materials and workmanship. In line with the existing materials condition at outline, it is recommended that sample panels for each of the wall types are constructed on site to ensure the required quality is met.

Consideration should also be given to how brick patterns join or connect at stepping junctions highlighted below. These locations present an opportunity to introduce subtle decorative brick detailing or a deliberate transition that would add visual interest and reinforce the quality of the architectural composition. Without careful resolution, there is a risk that these junctions could appear unresolved or incidental, potentially detracting from the clarity and robustness of the overall design. A more considered approach to these details would help elevate the architectural quality of the development.



As noted in the compliance statement, the entrance canopy below with solid timber reveals, provides a positive and locally responsive architectural reference. There may be merit in extending this design approach to House Types 1-3, which are otherwise more restrained in their architectural expression. Introducing similar detailing could help strengthen the visual coherence of the scheme, enrich the sequential experience moving along the street, and establish a stronger relationship with Aldbourne's local character. Such an approach would support the objectives of CP57 iii and would align with Building for a Healthy Life principles which promote the creation of memorable and characterful places.



Consideration should be given to the location and integration of meter boxes, vents and other utility apparatus within the building elevations. If not carefully positioned, these elements can detract from the quality of otherwise well composed facades and prominent street-facing elevations. Opportunities should therefore be explored to discreetly incorporate such features into the architectural design. For example, on dwellings incorporating bay windows (see below), meter boxes could potentially be recessed within the side reveal of the bay at low level, reducing their visual prominence whilst maintaining accessibility. A coordinated approach to the placement of service equipment would help preserve the quality and character of the streetscape.



Reveals to bay windows could be useful places for recessing meter boxes

There are several blank or largely blank gables on the proposed development which could be enhanced to ensure the scheme meets the design quality of CP57. Building for a Healthy Life highlights the importance of positively addressing corner plots and avoiding exposed blank elevations within the public realm, as these can diminish character and natural surveillance, and ultimately align with 'what red looks like' on p.69. It is therefore recommended that opportunities should be explored to enhance these prominent façades and ensure the scheme delivers the high standard of design sought by CP57.

In this regard, Plot 8 (House Type 4), which occupies a corner position as the street turns into the site, could benefit from the introduction of additional fenestration within the side gable, particularly where this could serve habitable accommodation. Similarly, Plots 6 and 7 occupy visually prominent locations and, whilst side windows are proposed, consideration could be given to increasing their scale or prominence to provide greater articulation and importance to side elevations. As noted in the WDG, this is something which is done well at the Tannery in Holt.

Another possible solution where gables are largely blank, could be to add material detailing that adds interest. For example, enhanced material treatment, decorative brickwork, changes in bond pattern, or other forms of façade articulation could provide visual interest. Such measures would help create more memorable street scenes, strengthen the architectural character of the development, and provide further opportunities to draw upon Aldbourne's rich vernacular tradition. The scheme below is an example of where decorative brickwork has been considered as part of the elevation composition.



Side gables include large windows to habitable rooms. Boundary walls include perforated brickwork. The Tannery, Holt.



Abode, Cambridge by Proctor and Matthews

The detailing of roof verges across the development should be reviewed moving forward. Whilst the overall architectural approach is supported, the quality of the scheme will ultimately be influenced by the execution of relatively small architectural details such as verges and eaves. Building for a Healthy Life, the National Design Guide and the Wiltshire Design Guide all place importance on the delivery of high-quality, locally distinctive architecture and careful attention to detailing. A standard applied verge detail risks appearing

generic and could undermine the otherwise bespoke character sought by the scheme. The applicant is therefore encouraged to explore a more refined verge treatment, with slim verge edges (as can be seen below), to strengthen the architectural quality of the development.



Arms Gardens, Sutton Benger

The following comments relate to specific house types:

House type 4

Consideration should be given to the composition of the principal elevation to ensure that the arrangement of openings reads as a deliberate architectural response. At present, the slightly offset entrance door sits close to, but not on, the building's centreline and consequently risks appearing unresolved rather than intentionally asymmetrical. A more symmetrical façade composition may provide a stronger and more balanced architectural expression, particularly given the otherwise simple and traditional form of the dwelling.

Should a symmetrical arrangement not be achievable, for example due to internal layout requirements or Part M accessibility considerations, it may be preferable to adopt a more clearly asymmetrical composition. This could be achieved through the composition of windows or other architectural features so that the elevation reads as intentionally designed rather than appearing marginally displaced. Either approach would help strengthen the architectural clarity of the dwelling and contribute positively to the overall design quality of the scheme.



House type 5

Similar consideration should be given to House Type 5, where the relationship between the front door and window arrangement would benefit from refinement.

Alignment between entrance doors and window openings should be explored where possible where possible and if this is not possible for Part M reasons then it is strongly recommended to explore alternative designs to strengthen the elevation. For example, the introduction of sidelights adjacent to entrance doors could provide additional visual interest, improve the proportioning of the façade and create a more deliberate architectural composition by aligning with windows.



Front Elevation
1 : 100

Thought should also be given to the location of downpipes from bay windows, this is currently a sub optimal position given the bay window outlook.



House type 12

The clipped gable form is welcomed and provides a positive reference to Alma Cottage and traditional local building forms. However, there may be an opportunity to develop the barn inspired architectural language further. Whilst the variation in roof form is supported, the current scale and arrangement of openings means the building does not immediately read as barn like building. Instead, its appearance is closer to that of a small civic or community building. Further refinement of the façade composition could therefore help reinforce the intended barn inspired character and strengthen its relationship with local rural building typologies. One possible approach could be to explore larger barn like openings in masonry that could be infilled with timber elements. The same approach could also be applied to house type 8 and may help to address the prominent corners into the scheme.



Alma cottage has large openings in the masonry reminiscent of barn vernacular architecture.



There may be opportunities to introduce larger openings within the masonry and experiment with the overall elevation composition.

Summary

Overall, the proposals demonstrate a logical layout, an appropriate scale of development, a strong landscape framework and a material palette that responds positively to the character of Aldbourne. The comments above are intended to further strengthen the architectural quality and placemaking potential. Subject to the comments being addressed, the scheme would be acceptable from an urban design perspective.

The success of the scheme will ultimately depend upon the quality of its architectural detailing, material specification and execution on site. It is recommended that the following matters are secured through appropriately worded conditions and/or approved details prior to the commencement of above ground works:

- Eaves, verge and roof edge details
- Window and door details including materials and finishes
- Rainwater goods, including profile, material and colour
- Further sample panels to those at described outline, demonstrating proposed brickwork, flint detailing, stonework, mortar and bond patterns.

Securing these details will help ensure the development achieves the design quality envisaged by the submitted Design Compliance Statement and accords with the expectations of Core Policy 57 in delivering a high quality development.