



Helen Garside
Wiltshire Council
Economic Development and Planning
Bythesea Road
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Our Ref: L10003059
26 August 2026

Dear Helen Garside

**Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2021 & Planning
(Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990**

**TOTTENHAM HOUSE, SAVERNAKE, MARLBOROUGH, SN8 3BE, ENGLAND
Application No. PL/2026/04921**

Thank you for your letter of 06 August 2026 regarding the above application for listed building consent. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice.

Historic England Advice

Proposals

This application relates to the proposed infill of two wells and a brick chamber located in the 18th century walled garden at Tottenham House. One of the wells is an unlined shaft of unknown but likely 20th century date, while the other is historic and brick lined and has a historic brick chamber over it that is accessed via a stepped brick entrance.

The well shafts would be infilled with pea shingle and capped with bentonite, and the brick chamber would be lined with a polythene membrane and filled with foamed concrete.

The submitted covering letter explains that the works to the historic brick-lined well and chamber are proposed to stabilise the structures and prevent the risk of sudden failure either during or after the approved construction works in the walled garden. It states that the proposals will 'ensure the long-term stability and preservation' of the structure and 'allow safe access/circulation' with the works intended to 'stabilise the structure below ground and prevent any sudden failure or associated health and safety risks'. Similarly, the infill of the unlined well shaft is proposed as it 'presents a potential hazard within the



Walled Garden setting during construction and once in use'.

Significance

Tottenham House is listed at Grade I and is surrounded by its ancillary buildings, including the Grade II* Stable Block. It sits within the Grade II* Tottenham House and Savernake Forest Registered Park and Garden (RPG), which includes the walled kitchen garden. There is also a scheduled Romano-British Kiln site within the estate. Tottenham House and the Stable Block and the Registered Park and Garden are on the Heritage at Risk Register.

Tottenham House is one of the largest houses in Wiltshire. It started life as a building designed by Lord Burlington but was later heavily remodelled for Charles Brudenell-Bruce, Earl of Ailsbury, in 1825 by Thomas Cundy and remains an important architectural example of their works.

The Registered Park and Garden (RPG) is extensive and includes the Savernake Forest. A small portion of the overall Registered Park and Garden is currently in the same ownership as Tottenham House. The landscape has been altered and manipulated by several hands over time, most notably by Richard Boyle, Lord Burlington, during early-C18 and subsequently by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, during the mid to late-C18.

The walled kitchen garden moved to its current location as part of the Lancelot 'Capability' Brown re-landscaping in the mid to late-C18 and is interesting due to its size and two-part design. It provides evidence of the Estate's changing function and fortunes over time.

No assessment of significance has been provided for the two wells and chamber in the walled garden. The submitted covering letter notes that the well and chamber are of historic significance and that the unlined well has no surviving built fabric or heritage structural elements. The submitted photographs suggest that the brick-lined well could date from the 18th or 19th century and that the chamber is of later construction, but further analysis is required to confirm this.

Impact

The proposed buildings in the walled garden will be close to, but not directly over, the chamber and wells. It is therefore unclear why the subterranean structures need to be infilled, rather than secured, and why the construction work could not be managed around the structures to ensure site safety.



The infill of the wells with pea shingle is proposed as a reversible solution that would preserve any potential deeper archaeological deposits. The proposed foamed concrete in the chamber is also described as a reversible infill solution, but the Structural Engineer's Statement by MBP clarifies that removal of the foamed concrete '*would likely require pickaxe, pneumatic hammer/chisel*'. It is therefore unlikely that the concrete would be removed once installed or that it could be removed without damaging the brick chamber.

Additional information is required to fully understand the significance of the historic structures, in accordance with policy HE5:1 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and the impact on this significance. The unlined well appears to be of later construction and low significance and its proposed infill would therefore likely have a neutral impact on the significance of the walled garden and Grade II* Registered Park and Garden. The infilling the historic brick-lined well and chamber would, however, result in some harm to the significance of the walled garden by removing legibility of an earlier (potentially 18th century origin) structure that contributed towards the historic use and function of the walled garden. This harm needs to be justified in accordance with policy HE6(4) of the NPPF.

Position

The need to secure the wells and chamber is understood, but it is unclear from the information provided why the structures could not be covered and secured, rather than infilled. For the reasons outlined above we also question whether the proposed use of foamed concrete is a reversible solution.

We consider that additional information regarding the significance of the structures and stronger justification for the proposed infill works is required. Less intrusive solutions that would preserve legibility of the structures should be explored and reasons provided as to why these other options are not viable if this is the case.

Recommendation

Historic England advises that your Council should seek additional information from the applicant to understand the significance of the wells and chamber and whether infilling them can be justified in accordance with the NPPF.

If there are any material changes to the proposals beyond those we have suggested, please contact us. If you propose to determine the application in its current form, please advise us of the decision in due course.

Yours sincerely



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