



Oliver Phippen
Wiltshire Council

Our Ref: P10003454
26 August 2026

Dear Mr Phippen

**T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 & Planning
(Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990**

**Land to the North of Whychurch Farm and West of Crudwell Road, Malmesbury
Application No. PL/2025/02257**

Thank you for your letter of 10 August 2026 regarding the above application for planning permission. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice.

Summary

The proposed development is located 670m north-east of the Benedictine monastery known as Malmesbury Abbey (National Heritage List for England No. 1010136) and comprises an outline planning application (with all matters reserved except access) for residential development. While the proposed development is located outside the scheduled area, there will be a modest impact on the setting of the scheduled monument which contributes to its significance. Historic England recommends that your Council needs to weigh this harm against any public benefits that may arise from this development.

Historic England Advice

Proposal

A residential development is proposed for land north of Whychurch Farm and West of Crudwell Road in Malmesbury, comprising the construction of up to 149 dwellings, new vehicular access with footways and cycleways, public open space, landscape and associated infrastructure.

Significance

The proposed works are located approximately 600m north-east of the Benedictine Monastery known as Malmesbury Abbey which is protected as a scheduled monument



under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (National Heritage List no: 1010136).

From the time of St Augustine's mission to re-establish Christianity in AD 597 to the reign of Henry VIII, monasticism formed an important facet of both religious and secular life in the British Isles. Settlements of religious communities, including monasteries, were built to house communities of monks, canons (priests), and sometimes lay-brothers, living a common life of religious observance under some form of systematic discipline.

Malmesbury Abbey has a written history covering 1300 years. Although today little of the monastic complex remains visible, extensive buried remains will survive and the monument is important as a site with early origins and which continued in use as a monastic house until its dissolution in 1535. Subsequently, the nave of the Abbey church has continued in use to the present day.

The monument lies within the historic town of Malmesbury with woodland and open farmland to the north-east. The town contributes to the monument's significance evoking the medieval settlement that originally surrounded it. To a lesser extent, the woodland and open fields to the north-east of the monument evoke the Abbey's original rural hinterland.

Impacts

Any changes within the setting of a designated heritage asset have the potential to harm its significance

The proposed residential settlement is sizable and will reduce a small part of the northern edge of the Abbey's wider rural setting. The impact of this development has been lessened by the creation of a green space at the southern end of the development.

Groundworks also have the potential to damage buried archaeology recorded during recent archaeological evaluation comprising geophysical survey in 2020 and archaeological trial trenching in 2022, in addition to LiDAR survey. These archaeological remains are associated with the medieval Whitchurch manorial complex settlement. We would recommend consulting with the archaeological officer for Wiltshire Council on the next steps to mitigate physical impacts from the development.

Position

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that 'Development proposals affecting heritage assets should be accompanied by an assessment of the significance



of the assets affected (including any contribution made by their setting) and of the potential effect of the proposal on their significance' (HE5(1)).

It goes on to state that 'Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal' (HE6(4)).

The proposal has the potential to impact on the significance of the monument through a change in its setting with the reduction in the open land to the north-east of Malmesbury Abbey. We have assessed this and have concluded that this proposal will have a modest impact on the significance of the monument.

In our opinion further development south of the proposal, would have a cumulatively harmful impact on the setting of the monument, and in turn its significance. We, therefore, would resist this.

Recommendation

Historic England recommends that in determining this application your Council should weigh the harm which the proposed development would cause to the significance of the Benedictine Abbey (NHLE 1010136) against such public benefits as the development may procure. In doing so, it should give great weight to the conservation of this designated heritage asset.

Yours sincerely

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