



Isobella Wise
Wiltshire Council
County Hall
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Our Ref: P10002718
27 August 2026

Dear Isobella Wise

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

**Co-operative Food, Mill Street, Calne, SN11 0HT
Application No. PL/2026/04365**

Thank you for your letter of 28 July 2026 regarding the above application for planning permission. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice.

Summary

The proposal is for the construction of a new 60 bed Care Home and 7 Assisted Living units and associated parking in Calne. The two sites proposed for development are in the Calne Conservation Area and linked by two footbridges across the River Marden. They would also be connected by a proposed public footpath.

Located in the historic core of Calne, the site is within the setting of several listed buildings including the Calne Free Church and 26-30 (even) Church Street (listed Grade II) and the Church of St Mary (Grade I).

The redevelopment of the Co-operative store and car park site offers a positive opportunity to introduce a new development in the heart of Calne that would notably improve the streetscape and enhance the Calne Conservation Area and the setting of nearby listed buildings. For the reasons outlined below, including its design and massing, it is considered that the proposed Care Home would not achieve this and should be refused.

Historic England Advice

Proposals

The proposal is for the construction of a new 60 bed Care Home, accessed from Mill Street, and 7 Assisted Living units and associated parking on the site of a public car park adjacent to The Pippin. The Care Home, associated landscaping and parking, would be located on the site of the Co-operative food store building (hereafter referred to as the Co-op) which is to be demolished in line with approved application PL/2025/02050. The two sites proposed for development are linked by two footbridges across the River Marden. One footbridge will be made accessible to the public and the other will serve the Care Home only.

The proposed Care Home fronts Mill Street at its junction with Church Street. It comprises a rectangular-plan building of two-storeys with a pitched-roof and central courtyard that incorporates shop units fronting Mill Street. The main entrance would be a two-storey glazed link, set back from the street, that connects the two storey building to a taller east range, also set back, with a mansard third storey.

A gap next to the Free Church on the west side of the main block incorporates a public footpath linking Mill Street to The Pippin via the footbridge over the river. The taller east range would be flanked by a private car park on the east side of the site, and a private garden would occupy the space between the Care Home and river.

The proposed assisted living units comprise two terraces of three and four units fronting The Pippin. The smaller eastern terrace would be set back from the road and flanked to the north and south by car parking and to the west by the access drive. The western building would be positioned closer to the road with landscaping at the rear and the proposed public footpath on the west side.

Significance

The application site is in the centre of the old Anglo-Saxon settlement of Calne, along the eastern boundary of the conservation area, which defines its historic core.

Calne is a market town centred on its river crossing within which the historic street pattern largely survives despite modern redevelopment, including the expansion and later demolition of the Harris bacon factory. The conservation area maintains a cohesive collection of historic buildings that include earlier, medieval two-storey domestic buildings with later frontages, simple one-storey weavers' cottages, and ornate landmark buildings the most of significant of which is the Grade I listed Church of St Mary.

The Co-op building is a modern low-level block, with a mansard roof and arched



walkways. Located in the historic core of Calne, it is within the setting of several listed buildings including the Calne Free Church and 26-30 (even) Church Street (listed Grade II) and the Church of St Mary (Grade I). It replaced a former group of gable-roofed buildings, including a cinema, between the Free Church, Mill Street and the river.

The low height of the Co-op building means that it has an overall neutral impact on the character of the conservation area, but its large unbroken mass, wide arched openings to the walkway and bulky mansard roof contrast with the character of the surrounding buildings which are subdivided into smaller units on smaller plots and have gabled roofs with windows and shopfronts of modest scale.

The Co-op building is set back from the historic street line which at the northwestern end of the site extended beyond the front elevation of the listed Free Church to align with 26 Church Street. Its recessed position weakens the line of Church Street and the patch-repaired area of tarmac occupying the former building line detracts.

Prior to redevelopment, the area of the car park adjacent to The Pippin was occupied by a terraced row of 19th century houses with gardens extending to the river. 1930s aerial photographs in the Historic England Archive show a gap between the former terrace and a taller gabled building in the north-east corner of the site that must have allowed views south from The Pippin to the Church of St Mary. The church tower is prominent in the current views south over the car park and river where it rises above the Co-op building.

Impact

The redevelopment of the Co-operative store and car park site offers a positive opportunity to introduce a new development in the heart of Calne that could notably improve the streetscape and enhance the conservation area and the setting of nearby listed buildings.

It also offers potential to improve pedestrian flow through, and appreciation of, the conservation area by enhancing connectivity between Mill Street, the river and The Pippin.

It is considered that the proposed design of the Care Home does not take full advantage of this positive redevelopment opportunity. The site is of a scale that can likely accommodate the extent of development proposed, but the design and massing of the Care Home building would not contribute positively to the character of the conservation area. The proposed building has a very large footprint with long elevations, a complex roofscape and a disjointed mix of materials and fenestration that are at odds with the character of the surrounding area.



Care Home

The proposed Care Home would occupy a much larger footprint than the current Co-op building and its eastern range would be significantly taller. Its overall mass would therefore be more dominant in the street scene, and in views across the conservation area, and not in keeping with the smaller scale buildings and plots that surround it.

While limestone is prevalent in Calne, the mix of proposed finishes including roughcast and ashlar limestone, stone banding and aluminium panels would appear at odds with the character of the surrounding buildings and result in a discordant overall design. The proposed proportions of the shopfronts and windows also appear incohesive, with the wide shopfronts giving the Mill Street elevation a top-heavy appearance.

To avoid the potential for harm to the significance of the conservation area we recommend that the design of the Care Home development, and especially the prominent Mill Street frontage, is amended so that it complements the character of the conservation area.

The Mill Street elevation of the Care Home would be prominent in views southeast along Church Street, at its junction with Mill Street, towards the Church of St Mary. The impact of the proposed building in this view is not assessed in the Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment and should be as this is a notable view of the church that takes in the tower, nave and main entrance porch. It is unclear if the roof of the taller east range of the Care Home, and its associated lift enclosure, would be visible in, and detrimental to, this view.

Consideration should be given to reinstating the lost historic building line at the junction between Mill Street and Church Street. This would require very careful detailing but would beneficially reinstate the line of Church Street, replace the detracting area of patched tarmac and, subject to detail, could assist in breaking up the massing of the new development.

The proposed Care Home would also be visible in a more restricted view of the site looking southwest along Mill Street, from the area adjoining the Grade II listed Pond Cottage. This view takes in the tower of the Church of St Mary and should be assessed in the Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment to understand the impact on the setting of the Grade I Church and the Grade II Pond Cottage and Calne Mill.

Proposed roof plans have not been provided and are required to understand the full impact of the proposals, and especially the potential impact on high level views of the development from surrounding listed buildings.

Assisted Living Units

The Design and Access Statement notes that the location of the assisted living units has been developed to maintain the views across the river, especially towards the church towers. The eastern proposed building would largely block the current view of the tower of the Church of St Mary from the southwest corner of The Pippin (View 2b in the Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment). This is unfortunate, but it is acknowledged that former buildings along The Pippin must have partially obscured this view of the church.

The proposed assisted living units generally accord with the scale of the terraced houses lining The Pippin. The window and door designs and hierarchy of openings could be amended to better reflect the character of the nearby historic buildings.

Public Footpath

The provision of a public footpath between Mill Street and The Pippin is positive, allowing improved pedestrian circulation through the town and across the river. The way the development flanks this footpath should, however, be more carefully considered both in terms of the environment created on the footpath between the development and listed Church and the views along it.

Viewpoint 3 in the Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment shows that the rear of the assisted living units will be prominent in the view along the footpath from Church Street. This rear elevation and any associated services will therefore need to be carefully designed.

We note that previous proposals sought to allow more pedestrian permeability through the site. While the need for security at the care home is understood, we question whether an amended layout that also addresses the above concerns regarding the overall massing of the Care Home building, could allow additional positive public access through the site.

Position

As stated above, the redevelopment of the Co-operative store and car park site offers a positive opportunity to introduce a new development in the heart of Calne that would notably improve the streetscape and enhance the Calne Conservation Area and the setting of nearby listed buildings. For the reasons outlined above, it is considered that the proposals would not achieve this and should be refused.

The proposed design of the Care Home should be amended to better respond to and



complement the character and appearance of the conservation area. This advice is in line with policy HE9(1b) of the National Planning Policy Framework, which requires that development proposals consider the conservation area's special architectural or historic interest in the design of development.

In accordance with policy HE5(1) of the NPPF, the impact of any proposed development on the views along Church Street and Mill Street towards the Church of St Mary should be assessed, with indicative views provided.

Recommendation

Historic England recommends that planning permission should be refused, and that the design of the Care Home should be amended to better respond to and complement the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Should the proposals remain unchanged, it will be for your Council to assess whether the potential harm to the significance of the conservation area would be outweighed by public benefits secured by the development. In doing so, it should give substantial weight to the conservation of this designated heritage asset.

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 inform us of the date of the committee and send us a copy of your report at the earliest opportunity. Please also advise us of the decision in due course.

Yours sincerely

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