

APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION CASE OFFICER REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/06413
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	Chrislion, 5 Grove Road, Sherston, Malmesbury, SN16 0NF
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Demolition of existing units and a dwelling, erecting 3No. dwellings.
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with conditions

NOTE

During the life of the application amended plans were received to address concerns regarding materials, boundary treatment, cycle storage and building height of Plot 3, near the northern boundary. A second consultation exercise was undertaken upon receipt of these amended plans.

A further revision was received following officer visits to the properties in High Street which back onto the application site. That revision referred to maintaining the height of the wall between the site and No.22 High Street. The report below is based on the amended plans.

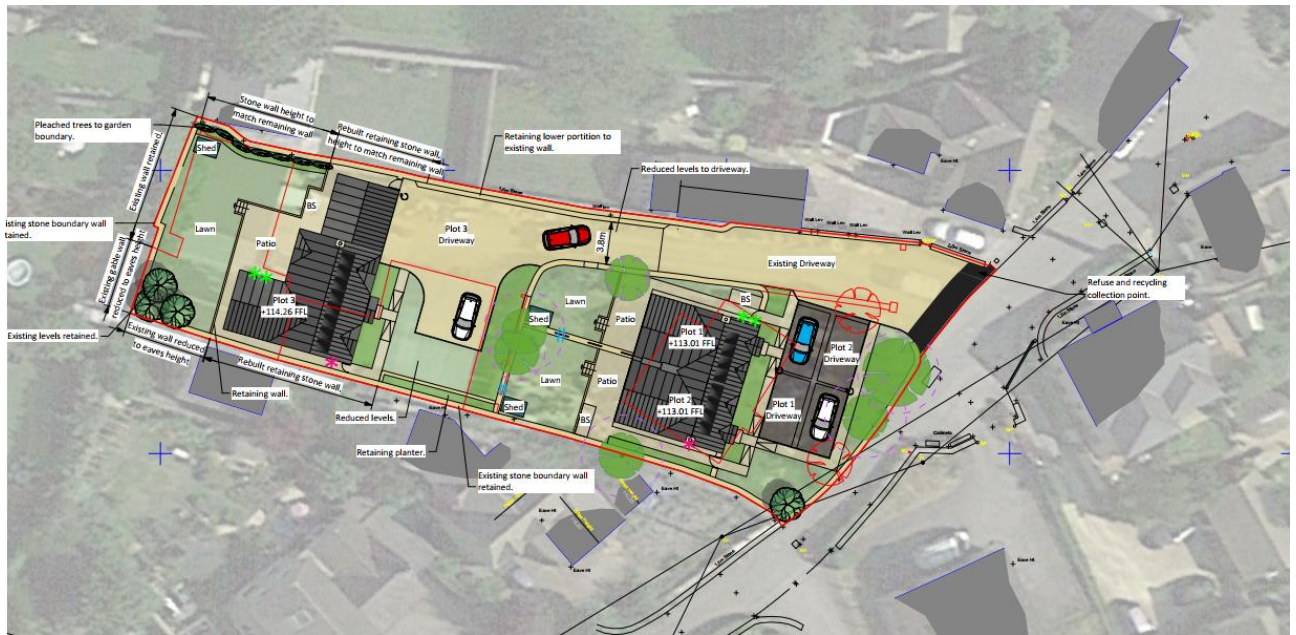
PROPOSAL

The proposal is to demolish the existing dwelling, No.5 Grove Road, which fronts the highway, as well as the commercial buildings forming a builder's yard on land to the rear, and to construct three open market dwellings with associated garage, parking and landscaping. Two of the dwellings would be a pair of semi-detached, 3-bed dwellings located at the frontage of the site on a substantially similar footprint as the existing dwelling, with parking shown to the front. The third dwelling would be set to the rear on the land currently comprising the builder's yard and would be a 4-bed detached dwelling with attached garage.

The dwellings are proposed to have natural Cotswold stone elevations with conservation green uPVC windows with natural stone heads and cills, set under a grey slate roof. Integrated PV panels are proposed within the roofs of all three dwellings. Plots 1 and 2 would have eaves and ridge heights of approximately 4.6m and 7.5m respectively. Plot 3 would have similar eaves height, with a ridge of about 8.1m. The garage, proposed to be sited on the north elevation of plot 3 would be finished in the same materials, and would have eaves and ridge heights of c.2.4m and 5m respectively.

Vehicular access would be taken from the existing access on Grove Road, which would be retained and utilised to serve the development. Parking, turning areas, private gardens, refuse storage and cycle storage are proposed within the site, as shown on the extract of the revised block plan shown below. Associated landscaping, boundary treatments, drainage infrastructure and other ancillary works are also proposed.

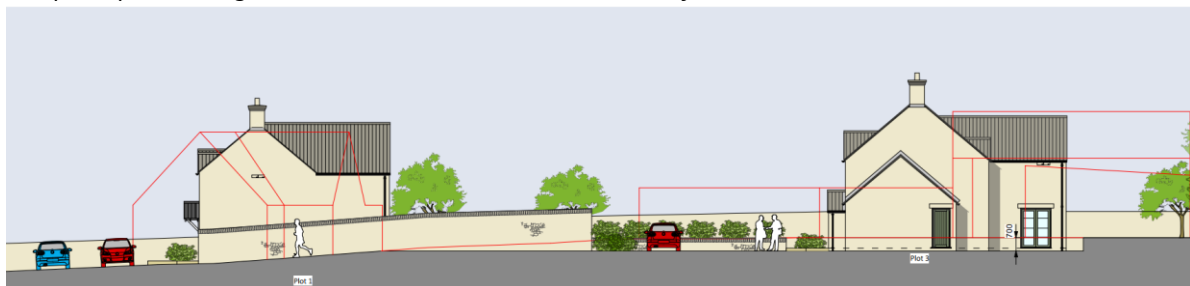
Below: Extract of submitted revised block plan, showing existing boundary walls to be retained (or rebuilt where necessary).



Below: Extract of revised street scene plan – showing Plots 1 and 2 fronting Grove Road:



Below: Extract of revised cross section of site, showing N elevation of Plot 1, with Plot 3 to the rear (west). Existing structures on site are indicated by the red outline:



The development would result in the loss of the existing dwelling and builders' yard buildings on the site and the provision of three market dwellings, representing a net increase of two dwellings.

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The application site comprises a residential property known as *Chrislion* and associated builders' yard/storage area located on the western side of Grove Road, and fairly centrally within the defined settlement boundary of Sherston. Grove Road is a narrow residential road which, together with Noble Street loops around to the east of High Street but adjoining at either end of that central street to form a relatively large, enclosed parcel of built form in this central location. The site is bound to the west by the rear boundaries of properties which front High Street (nos. 18-20 and 22) and to the east is the highway of Grove Road. To the north the site is partly bound by the residential property of no.4 Grove Road and further into the plot the rear curtilage of no.14 High Street forms the boundary, this being formed of a relatively low stone wall; to the south is the residential property of no.5a Grove Road.

Grove Road is a predominantly residential highway of rural village character with many of the dwellings immediately fronting the highway. There is a mix of older buildings and structures as well as more recent housing developments. The site falls within the 'predominantly pre-1900' character area of the settlement¹.

The site currently contains a chalet style bungalow at the front of the site, as shown on the photograph below; also shown is the access to the builder's yard which is taken between that property and the neighbouring no.4 Grove Road to the north:



Existing no.5 Grove Road



Access to the builder's yard / annex building of no.4 Grove Road

Land comprising the builder's yard is shown below. Building no.1 is a larger building set against the rear boundary of the site, and understood to have originally been a barn forming part of the former farmstead; also against the rear boundary, building no.2 is of lower, flat roof form. Set to the front of this parcel is building no.3, a lower form building still, which takes the visual form of a converted garage; these are shown on the photographs below with cross-reference:

¹ As per the Sherston Neighbourhood Plan



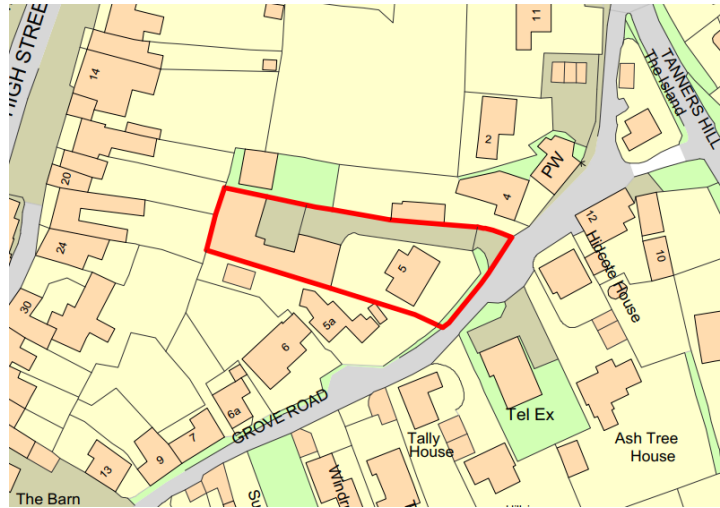
Building no. 3 in the foreground; buildings 1 and 2 to the rear

The photographs below show the shared boundary with adjacent nos.14 High Street (to the north, and showing a “summerhouse” in their rear curtilage, separated by low stone wall); and shared boundary with no.5a Grove Road to the south:



Shared boundaries with no.14 High Street and with no.5a Grove Road

The site extends to approximately 0.13 hectares, with access taken from Grove Road via an existing vehicular access which serves the site. An extract of the submitted location plan is shown below, with the site outlined in red:



The latest aerial photograph, below, shows the site in the context of the surrounding built development:



The site is located within the Sherston Conservation Area (indicated with the light brown wash on the plan below) and the Cotswolds National Landscape.



Several listed buildings are located to the west of the site beyond the rear boundary (indicated in darker brown on the plan above), including Grade II listed buildings fronting High Street. Historic (but not listed) stone boundary walls are present around parts of the site and form part of its relationship with the surrounding historic townscape.

Topographically, the site lies on sloping land, with levels generally falling towards the north-east and Grove Road. The site is located within Flood Zone 1, with no watercourses within or adjoining the site. The nearest watercourse is the River Avon, approximately 150m to the south. Groundwater mapping indicates a risk of flooding to subsurface assets associated with groundwater emergence; however, surface manifestation of groundwater is identified as unlikely. The site is not located within an area of significant surface water flood risk.

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
N/91/01754/OUT - Outline Planning Decision - Approved Date: 23/9/1991 – Outline – Two Dwellings & Garaging

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Statutory Legislation:

- Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

National Planning Policy:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) August 2026
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- National Design Guide

Development Plan:

The development plan for Wiltshire comprises the *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)* (*adopted January 2015*) and any made neighbourhood plans, which remains the principal statutory planning document guiding development across the county. In line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Though the development plan is considered as a whole, those parts deemed to be particularly relevant to this application are listed below:

The adopted *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)*, with particular regard to:

- Core Policy 1 Settlement Strategy
- Core Policy 2 Delivery Strategy

- Core Policy 35 Existing Employment Land
- Core Policy 41 Sustainable construction and low-carbon energy
- Core Policy 45 Meeting Wiltshire's Housing Needs
- Core Policy 50 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Core Policy 51 Landscape
- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
- Core Policy 58 Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment
- Core Policy 60 Sustainable Transport
- Core Policy 61 Transport & Development
- Core Policy 64 Demand Management

North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 (Saved Policies)

- NE14: Trees, Site Features and the Control of New Development

Sherston Neighbourhood Plan 2006 to 2026 (Made - May 2019)

Objective 2: The Plan will ensure that all future development in the village:

- Conserves or enhances Sherston's significant heritage assets;
- Respects the high quality of the local environment by employing the use of building materials in sympathy with the Cotswold AONB;
- Is of the highest quality of design – utilising wherever possible traditional styles and proportions;
- Safeguarding those parts of the settlement that have been identified as being worthy of protection from development by reason of their landscape quality, ecological importance, historic interest or local significance.

Objective 4: The Plan will seek to provide for the housing needs of the community. It will do this through: ...

- Allowing an appropriate amount of development in selected locations – to include houses for sale on the open market, affordable rented and shared equity housing, and sheltered elderly persons accommodation;
- Ensuring that all such development includes a mix of house types capable of meeting the identified local need;
- Considering the redevelopment of existing brown field development opportunities first;

Supplementary Planning Documents and other Guidance:

- Wiltshire Design Guide (adopted April 2024)
- Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026, adopted 2015 - including the Car Parking Strategy and Cycling Strategy, adopted 2015
- Sherston Conservation Area Statement April 1999

Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan

- Policy CE1: Landscape

- Policy CE4: Local distinctiveness

ISSUES

The main issues that need to be addressed in this case include:

- **Whether the development is acceptable in principle (CP 1 and 2):** Assessment of the suitability of the development in terms of land use, as well as alignment with Wiltshire's Core Policies 1 and 2.
- **Whether the scheme constitutes high quality design (CP 57):** Evaluation of the design of the proposal and whether it meets the standards set out in Core Policy 57 for high quality design.
- **Whether the scheme would lead to any unacceptable amenity impacts (CP 57):** Evaluation of the design of the proposal and whether it meets the standards set out in Core Policy 57 for appropriate amenity and relationship with adjoining uses.
- **Whether the scheme would preserve or enhance the historic environment (CP 58):** Consideration of the impact of the development on heritage assets and the historic environment in line with Core Policy 58.
- **Whether the scheme would have an acceptable landscape impact (CP 51):** Review of the potential impact on the landscape, including visual amenity, scenic quality, and the integration of the development within its surroundings, as required by Core Policy 51.
- **Whether the proposal would have a negative effect upon highway safety, including if there is sufficient parking for the proposed development (CP 61 and 64):** Assessment of the proposal's impact on highway safety, traffic flow, and whether the parking provision complies with planning policy, particularly Core Policies 61 and 64.
- **Whether there would be any harmful impacts upon protected species or habitats (CP 50):** Consideration of the ecological impact of the development, including any effects on protected species or habitats, in line with Core Policy 50.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Sherston Parish Council: No objection subject to the following considerations:

"No objection in principle to this development but the Parish Council have reservations/concerns about the parking layout. The removal and relocation of the proposed parking spaces serving Units 1 and 2 to improve the overall appearance of the proposed development as seen from the site frontage and to ensure that any future residents are likely to make full use of the proposed spaces. The layout as shown is considered to be totally impractical in this regard.

The replacement of the proposed two-metre-high wooden boundary fencing by stone walling – which is considered to be more appropriate in this setting. The Parish Council would ask that the Planning Officer to check whether the privacy of the High Street resident's gardens are compromised.

The Parish Council would also like to ask if this an overdevelopment of a fairly small plot?

The Parish Council would also like to ask Wiltshire Council to consider seeking improvements to the site layout.

The Parish Council would like to ask Wiltshire Council to require the Applicants to assess the potential impact of this proposed development on the three existing Listed Buildings that adjoin the western site boundary. These are: The Pines, Drapers Rest and Number 22 High Street.

The Parish Council would like to ask Wiltshire Council that they seek access into the rear gardens of the three existing properties adjoining to the west of the site if at all possible to fully assess the potential adverse impact of the proposed development on the residential amenities of the existing occupiers.”

WC Highways: No objection subject to conditions

The Local Highway Authority was consulted on the application and initially responded on 01/09/2025. The Highway Officer noted that the proposal would result in a net increase of two dwellings through the redevelopment of the existing dwelling and contractor's yard/buildings. Whilst visibility from the existing access onto Grove Road is restricted to approximately 15 metres in one direction, it was acknowledged that Grove Road is narrow in nature, which serves to reduce vehicle speeds. The Highway Officer further noted that the access is existing and that the development was not expected to result in a significant increase in vehicle movements when compared with the existing lawful use of the site, comprising a dwelling and contractor's business. The proposed parking provision was considered to accord with Wiltshire's minimum parking standards and was considered sufficient to allow vehicles to manoeuvre within the site. No highway objection was raised, subject to conditions relating to a Construction Method Statement, parking provision and electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

Following the submission of amended plans, the Local Highway Authority was re-consulted and provided further comments on 27/05/2026. No objection was raised to the revised scheme and the Highway Officer confirmed that they deferred to their previous comments. A revised Construction Method Statement condition was recommended, requiring details of contractor parking, loading and unloading arrangements, materials storage and construction hours to be agreed prior to commencement of development.

Overall, the Local Highway Authority raises no objection to the development subject to appropriate planning conditions.

WC Conservation: Comment

The application was reviewed by the Council's Conservation Officer, who provided a consultation response dated 08/08/2025. The comments did not object to the principle of the development but requested further information regarding the significance of heritage assets affected by the proposal and the impact of the development upon them. Concerns were also

raised regarding the originally proposed use of reconstituted stone, reconstituted roofing materials, brick chimneys and close-boarded fencing, with amendments requested to better reflect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Following receipt of these comments, additional heritage information was submitted in the form of a Heritage Impact Assessment, together with revised plans and material specifications. The revised proposals provide for natural Cotswold stone elevations, natural stone heads and cills, grey slate roofing, natural stone boundary walls and conservation-style architectural detailing. The submitted plans also identify natural stone boundary treatments in place of the fencing originally referenced within the application documents.

The principal design concerns identified in the original consultation response have been addressed through the revised material palette and boundary treatments.

Following the submission of additional heritage information, including a Heritage Impact Assessment, the application was reviewed by a different Wiltshire Council Conservation Officer. The Officer acknowledged that the additional assessment had identified the historic workshop building and boundary walls as non-designated heritage assets, and an objection was raised to the proposed demolition of the nineteenth-century stone workshop building and alterations to historic boundary walls.

The Conservation Officer considers the workshop building and associated boundary walling to possess architectural and historic interest and to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Sherston Conservation Area. It is noted that the workshop building appears on historic mapping and incorporates traditional stone construction which the Conservation Officer considers contributes to its significance as a non-designated heritage asset.

The Conservation Officer advises that the demolition of the workshop building would result in the loss of a non-designated heritage asset and considers this harm has not been sufficiently justified. Concern is also raised regarding proposed alterations to sections of historic boundary walling. The Conservation Officer recommends that the scheme be revised to retain and reuse the historic workshop building, either through continued commercial use or conversion to an alternative use, together with the retention and repair of the boundary walls.

WC Archaeology: No comment

Wiltshire Council archaeology advised that they had no comments to make regarding the application.

Wiltshire Council Ecology: No objection subject to conditions

The Council's Ecologist reviewed the application, including the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, subsequent bat emergence surveys, Biodiversity Metric and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment. The Ecologist raises no objection subject to conditions.

With regard to protected species, the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal identified potential bat roosting habitat within the existing buildings and recommended further survey work. In

response, three dusk emergence surveys were undertaken between July and September 2025. These surveys found no evidence of bats roosting within the buildings and concluded that the development would not result in the loss of a bat roost. The Ecologist accepts these findings and advises that, subject to the retention and enhancement of key boundary features, the functionality of habitats used by foraging and commuting bats would not be adversely affected.

The Ecologist notes that retained boundary features should be buffered and enhanced where possible and recommends a lighting condition to ensure that any external lighting is designed to avoid adverse impacts on bats and other wildlife. Advice is also provided regarding the protection of nesting birds during the breeding season and implementation of a precautionary method of working for amphibians and reptiles.

In relation to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), the Ecologist confirms that a completed statutory biodiversity metric and supporting BNG assessment have been submitted and reviewed. The submitted baseline habitat information is accepted as accurate and sufficient to inform the assessment. The Ecologist notes that the statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan condition will apply should planning permission be granted.

The Ecologist further advises that ecological enhancement measures should be secured within the development, including features for bats, birds and hedgehogs, and recommends conditions requiring compliance with the submitted ecological documents, delivery of biodiversity enhancement measures and the implementation of an appropriate lighting strategy.

Overall, the Council's Ecologist raises no objection to the proposal subject to planning conditions.

REPRESENTATIONS

In accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), the application was publicised by way of:

- Neighbour notification letters sent to adjoining and nearby properties;
- A site notice displayed near the site;
- An advertisement placed in the local press

As some adjoining properties were not directly consulted on validation of the application, a further direct neighbour consultation was undertaken to ensure all such adjoining properties were directly notified.

A total of six representations have been received in relation to the application, comprising four responses to the original consultation and two responses following reconsultation on amended plans. The issues raised are summarised below:

- Concerns regarding the potential impact of the development on existing vegetation and wildlife habitats along the western site boundary, including mature hedgerow vegetation used by birds and other species. A request was made for the retention and protection of the boundary hedge where possible.
- Concerns regarding construction traffic and additional traffic movements on Grove Road, which is described as a narrow road already experiencing pressures from other development works in the vicinity.
- Concerns that Plot 3 would be higher than existing buildings on the site and positioned close to neighbouring residential properties, resulting in overbearing impacts, loss of outlook, overshadowing and reduction in natural light.
- Concerns regarding loss of privacy arising from first-floor windows within Plot 3 overlooking neighbouring dwellings and gardens. It was suggested that any affected windows should be obscure glazed.
- Concerns that the proposal may represent overdevelopment of the site.
- Concerns regarding the effect of the development on neighbouring residential amenity, including impacts on rights of light, sunlight and outlook.
- Requests for increased boundary treatment or screening between Plot 3 and adjoining residential properties.
- Concerns regarding the impact of the development on the setting of adjacent listed buildings and the historic environment.
- Concerns that amended plans repositioned Plot 3 closer to neighbouring properties than previously proposed, resulting in increased concerns regarding overlooking, loss of privacy, dominance and overshadowing.
- Concerns that the Heritage Impact Assessment does not accurately reflect the relationship between the proposed Plot 3 dwelling and existing buildings, and that the revised siting of Plot 3 would adversely affect views from neighbouring properties, including views towards Holy Cross Church.

ASSESSMENT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

In accordance with this statutory requirement, this application has been assessed against the relevant policies of the Development Plan, including the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and, where applicable, any made Neighbourhood Plans. Consideration has also been given to the

policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as a material consideration in the assessment.

Principle of Development

Policy Context

Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy of the WCS establishes a hierarchy of settlements to guide where development should be focused. The policy prioritises growth in:

- Principal Settlements (e.g., Salisbury, Chippenham, Trowbridge) – main focus for strategic growth.
- Market Towns – support local services and employment; suitable for sustainable development.
- Local Service Centres – smaller towns and villages with a range of services; limited development supported.
- Large and Small Villages – development should be limited and respond to local needs.
- Outside the defined settlements – development is strictly controlled and generally not supported unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy of the WCS sets out how development will be distributed and delivered across Wiltshire. The policy emphasises:

- Sustainable patterns of growth, reducing the need to travel and supporting local services.
- Development should be plan-led, aligning with the settlement strategy and supported by infrastructure.
- Windfall development (not allocated in plans) must still comply with the principles of sustainable development.
- Development outside settlement boundaries is generally not permitted, unless it meets specific policy exceptions (as set out in paragraph 4.25 of the WCS).

Together, CP1 and CP2 ensure that new development is strategically located, sustainable, and supports the character and function of Wiltshire's communities.

Assessment and Conclusion

The site lies within the settlement boundary of Sherston, identified as a Large Village within the Wiltshire Core Strategy and is considered to be a sustainable location in terms of accessibility to services.

Policy S3 of the NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development and states that Policy S4 should be applied when considering development proposals within settlements. Policy S4 states that development proposals should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects when assessed against the national decision-making policies of the Framework.

Core Policy 45 seeks to support the delivery of housing that contributes towards meeting Wiltshire's identified housing needs. Although modest in scale, the proposal would deliver a

net increase of two market dwellings within the settlement boundary and would make a positive contribution towards housing supply.

The principle of residential development within the settlement boundary is therefore considered acceptable, subject to compliance with other relevant development plan policies and material considerations.

Loss of Builders' Yard Use

The proposal would result in the loss of a small builders' yard and associated storage buildings located to the rear of the site. Whilst the site appears to have been used in connection with a local building business, it is not allocated employment land, does not form part of a Principal Employment Area and is located within a predominantly residential part of Sherston.

Core Policy 35 is principally concerned with the protection of Wiltshire's Principal Employment Areas (as listed in the Area Strategies) and established employment sites within Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Principal Employment Areas.

Sherston is identified within the Wiltshire Core Strategy as a Large Village and the application site does not fall within any of the categories specifically referenced by the policy.

Furthermore, no evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that the site performs a strategic employment function or makes a significant contribution to the supply of employment land within the area. The use appears limited in scale and occupies a constrained site within an otherwise residential environment.

It is also material that the proposal would redevelop a previously developed site within the settlement boundary, remove utilitarian yard structures and hardstanding, and provide a net gain of two dwellings at a time when the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. In these circumstances, whilst the loss of the builders' yard is acknowledged, it is not considered to attract significant weight against the proposal.

Design and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

Policy Context

Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that development responds positively to local character and distinctiveness, respects the natural, historic and built environment, retains important landscape features where appropriate, and provides a high standard of design that is compatible with surrounding land uses and creates safe and accessible places. CP41 addresses sustainable construction and low carbon energy.

Section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework places significant weight on achieving well-designed places, with Policy DP3 setting out the key principles for well-designed places, taking into account *inter alia* built form, nature, climate and identity. The Wiltshire Design Guide further promotes a context-led approach to design which responds to local character, materials and settlement patterns whilst supporting modern living standards.

The Building for a Healthy Life framework encourages the creation of attractive, inclusive and sustainable places, with particular regard to walkability, access to green space and the provision of high-quality residential environments.

Assessment

The application site occupies a previously developed parcel of land within the built-up area of Sherston and is surrounded by existing residential development. The site currently contains a detached dwelling at the Grove Road frontage together with a builders' yard and associated workshop/storage buildings to the rear. As such, the principle of built development on the site is already well established.

The proposed development would replace the existing dwelling and builders' yard buildings with three dwellings. Plots 1 and 2 would occupy the frontage of the site facing Grove Road, whilst Plot 3 would be located within the rear portion of the site. The arrangement would maintain a built frontage to Grove Road and retain the established access to the site.

In terms of scale and layout, the pair of semi-detached dwellings proposed at the front of the site would occupy a footprint broadly comparable to that of the existing dwelling. Whilst set slightly further back within the plot to accommodate parking provision, the development would maintain a similar relationship with Grove Road and would sit comfortably within the established pattern of residential development. The proposal would not appear incongruous within the street scene or introduce a form of development that is uncharacteristic of the surrounding area.

The site is located within a predominantly residential part of the village where dwellings of varying age, form and design are present. Concerns have been raised that the proposal represents an overdevelopment of the site, however it is considered that adequate spacing would be retained around the proposed dwellings, together with garden areas, parking provision and landscaping.

The proposed material palette has evolved during the course of the application to comprise natural Cotswold stone walling, natural stone detailing, grey slate roofs and natural stone boundary walls. These materials are considered appropriate to the local context and would help ensure the development integrates successfully with its surroundings. Existing trees to the frontage would be retained and additional planting is proposed, including a new tree within the front part of the site, which would contribute positively to the appearance of the development.

Particular weight is also given to the visual enhancement that would arise from the redevelopment of the rear part of the site. Currently, views along the access lane are terminated by utilitarian workshop and storage buildings of concrete block construction with industrial-style roller shutter doors. The proposal would replace these structures with a more traditionally designed dwelling and garage incorporating natural stone walls and slate roofing. Whilst introducing new residential built form, the development would provide a more coherent and visually attractive appearance than the existing builders' yard and associated structures.

The proposal also incorporates elements of sustainable design consistent with Core Policy 41 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Integrated photovoltaic panels are proposed within the roof slopes of all three dwellings, contributing towards the generation of low-carbon energy and helping to reduce the operational energy demands of the development. As new-build dwellings, the development will also be required to meet contemporary Building Regulation requirements relating to energy efficiency. In this regard, the proposal is considered to support the objectives of Core Policy 41 relating to sustainable construction, climate change adaptation and the use of low-carbon technologies.

Overall, the proposed layout, scale, appearance and landscaping are considered to respond appropriately to the character of the surrounding area. The development would represent an improvement to the visual appearance of the site and would accord with the design objectives of Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the Wiltshire Design Guide and Policy DP3 of the NPPF.

Conclusion

The proposal is of an appropriate scale, design and layout for its context and would sit comfortably within the established residential character of the area. Through the use of appropriate materials, retention of existing trees, additional landscaping and the replacement of utilitarian builders' yard structures with a high-quality residential development, the scheme would have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area. The proposal therefore accords with Core Policies 57 and 41 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the design principles of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Impact on Heritage Assets

Policy Context

The application site lies within the Sherston Conservation Area and within the setting of nearby Grade II listed buildings fronting High Street, including Nos. 18–20 High Street, No. 22 High Street and No. 16 High Street. The statutory duties set out within Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 are therefore engaged. Special regard must be had to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings, and special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to protect, conserve and, where possible, enhance the historic environment, including designated heritage assets and their settings. Core Policy 57 also requires development to respond positively to local character and distinctiveness.

Policies HE7 and HE9 of the NPPF refer to decisions regarding NDHAs and Conservation Areas respectively.

The Sherston Conservation Area Statement identifies the village as a whole as having a distinctive historic character, with traditional stone buildings, historic plot forms, boundary walls and intimate streetscapes forming part of its special interest. The Conservation Area

Statement also identifies walls as an important defining feature of Sherston's character, noting the contribution made by dry stone and rubble stone boundary walls to the appearance of the village. No reference to the workshop proposed for removal was found in the Conservation Area Statement or Neighbourhood Plan.

Assessment

Significance of the site and surrounding heritage assets

The site occupies a backland position within the historic core of Sherston, to the west of Grove Road and to the rear of properties fronting High Street. It currently contains a 1960s chalet-style dwelling at the Grove Road frontage and a builders' yard/storage area with associated workshop and storage structures to the rear. The Council's Conservation Officer noted that the existing host building is modern and has no architectural or historic merit.

The submitted Heritage Impact Assessment identifies that parts of the site have historic interest due to their backland position, historic plot boundaries and surviving boundary walling. It also identifies some non-designated heritage interest in parts of the existing historic boundary walls and a nineteenth-century workshop range, although the wider site is currently affected by modern yard buildings, hardstanding and storage uses.

The Grade II listed buildings to the west of the application site principally address High Street, with their main elevations and primary historic relationship facing away from the application site. The rear garden areas and boundary walls provide separation between those listed buildings and the application site. The topography is also relevant, as the High Street properties sit at a higher level than the application site.

Conservation Officer comments and amended scheme

The Conservation Officer initially provided comments dated 08/08/2025. No objection in principle was raised to the redevelopment of the site; however, concerns were identified regarding the level of heritage information submitted, particularly in relation to the significance of the existing buildings and the effect of the proposal on the Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings. The Conservation Officer also raised concerns regarding the originally proposed use of reconstituted stone, reconstituted roofing materials, brick chimneys and close-boarded fencing, and requested higher quality materials and stone boundary treatments.

Following those comments, a Heritage Impact Assessment was submitted and the scheme was amended. The current proposals now include natural Cotswold stone elevations, natural stone heads and cills, natural grey slate roofs, conservation green aluminium windows, 1.8m high natural stone boundary walls, integrated photovoltaic panels and black rainwater goods.

Impact on the Sherston Conservation Area

The existing site has a mixed relationship with the Conservation Area. Whilst the historic backland plot form and boundary walls contribute to the historic character of the area, the existing chalet bungalow, modern workshop/storage buildings, hardstanding and builders'

yard activity do not make a positive architectural contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The Heritage Impact Assessment similarly identifies the existing 1960s dwelling and modern yard structures as being of no heritage interest.

The proposal would remove the existing dwelling and yard buildings and replace them with three dwellings. Plots 1 and 2 would address Grove Road, while Plot 3 would be located within the rear part of the site. The development would therefore introduce additional built form within the site, but this would be within an already developed backland site, within the built-up area of the village.

The revised scheme incorporates a more locally responsive materials palette, including natural Cotswold stone, natural stone heads and cills, natural grey slate roofing and stone boundary walls. These details are considered to be broadly compatible with the traditional character of Sherston and address the principal concerns raised by the Conservation Officer regarding the quality of external materials and boundary treatments.

The Conservation Area Statement identifies boundary walls as an important component of Sherston's character. The proposed 1.8m high natural stone boundary walls is therefore a positive amendment when compared with the previously referenced close-boarded fencing and would help the development sit more comfortably within the historic village context.

Overall, whilst the proposal would result in change within the Conservation Area, this would occur on an already developed and visually compromised site. The replacement of the existing modern dwelling and utilitarian yard structures with a scheme using natural stone materials and stone boundary treatments is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Sherston Conservation Area. Subject to appropriate conditions securing external materials, boundary treatments and landscaping the proposal is considered acceptable in Conservation Area terms.

Impact on the setting of listed buildings

The nearest listed buildings are located to the west of the application site, fronting High Street. No. 22 High Street appears to be the closest listed building due to its rear extension, with its rear built form approximately 17.4m from the boundary with the application site. The proposed Plot 3 dwelling would be approximately 11m from the shared rear boundaries with Nos. 18–22 High Street. However, the existing workshop/storage buildings within the application site are positioned hard against, or very close to, the western boundary. Indeed, the gable end wall of existing “building 1” forms the boundary of No.22 High Street. For amenity reasons (discussion and photograph below) this wall will be retained to the eaves height of the existing building.

The proposal would therefore not introduce built form into an undeveloped part of the setting of the listed buildings. Rather, it would replace existing low-quality workshop and yard buildings with a detached dwelling set further away from the shared western boundary than the existing structures. Although the proposed dwelling would be two storeys and domestic in scale, it would be viewed, where visible, in the context of the existing built-up village environment and the established backland development pattern.

The listed buildings front High Street and derive much of their significance from their historic fabric, architectural interest, principal elevations and relationship with the High Street frontage. Their rear garden areas contribute to their setting, but the application site is separated from the listed buildings by rear boundaries and level changes. The Heritage Impact Assessment notes that the application site has no meaningful role in the primary setting of the listed buildings beyond immediate rear boundary enclosure.

Given the existing condition of the site, the presence of existing workshop/storage buildings close to the shared boundary, the separation distances involved, and the higher level of the High Street properties, the proposal is not considered to result in harm to the significance of the nearby listed buildings through change within their setting. The development would preserve the setting of the listed buildings in accordance with Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

NDHA

The submitted Heritage Impact Assessment identifies several elements of historic fabric within the site, including historic boundary walls and a nineteenth-century stone workshop range, as non-designated heritage assets. The workshop building is considered to possess historic and evidential value arising from its age, traditional limestone construction and relationship with the historic development of the site. The building appears on historic mapping and forms part of the historic evolution of this backland plot.

The significance of the workshop building has been considered carefully. The submitted Heritage Impact Assessment identifies the building as a non-designated heritage asset and the Council's Conservation Officer similarly considers it to possess heritage significance.

However, it is also material that the building is not included within any adopted local list, is not specifically identified as a non-designated heritage asset within the Sherston Conservation Area Statement or the Sherston Neighbourhood Plan, and the case officer has identified no separate record of formal recognition as a heritage asset. Sherston Parish Council have also not referred to this building in their comments, or objected to its removal. The assessment of the building as a non-designated heritage asset therefore derives principally from its historic fabric and evidential interest as identified through the submitted Heritage Impact Assessment and the advice of the Conservation Officer. Furthermore, the Heritage Impact Assessment itself concludes that the building is of modest local significance, with its heritage value deriving principally from evidential and historic interest rather than any exceptional architectural, aesthetic or communal significance.

Whilst the Conservation Officer has objected to the loss of the workshop building, it is also material that the asset occupies a relatively concealed position within the rear of the site and makes only a limited contribution to public views within the Conservation Area. Its significance is therefore considered to derive primarily from its historic fabric and evidential value rather than any substantial townscape role or landmark quality. The contribution made by the workshop to the wider character and appearance of the Conservation Area is consequently considered to be limited.

The proposed development would result in the loss of the workshop building and therefore the complete loss of the non-designated heritage asset. In accordance with Policy HE7 of the NPPF, a balanced judgement is required having regard to both the significance of the asset and the scale of harm arising from the proposal. Whilst the proposal would result in the total loss of the building, the asset is considered to be of only modest significance and limited visibility within the wider Conservation Area. The proposal would also retain and repair sections of historic boundary walling which contribute positively to the site's historic character.

The harm identified is weighed against the benefits of the scheme, including the redevelopment of a previously developed site within the settlement boundary of a Large Village, the delivery of three dwellings (resulting in a net gain of two dwellings), the contribution towards housing supply, the removal of unsympathetic modern structures and hardstanding, and the introduction of a development which utilises a significantly improved palette of materials and boundary treatments that better reflects the character of Sherston. Having regard to the modest significance of the asset, it is considered that these benefits outweigh the harm arising from its loss.

Conclusion

The proposal is not considered to result in harm to the significance of the nearby listed buildings through change within their setting and would preserve their setting in accordance with Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Furthermore, for the reasons set out above, the proposal is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Sherston Conservation Area in accordance with Section 72(1) of the Act.

The proposal would result in the loss of a nineteenth-century workshop building identified within the submitted Heritage Impact Assessment as a non-designated heritage asset. Whilst this loss would result in harm through the removal of a heritage asset of modest local significance, the building is not specifically identified within the Sherston Conservation Area Statement, the Sherston Neighbourhood Plan, or any adopted local list, and is considered to make a limited contribution to the wider character and appearance of the Conservation Area due to its enclosed backland location and limited visibility from the public realm. The significance of the asset is therefore considered to derive principally from its evidential and historic value rather than any substantial townscape role.

In accordance with HE7 of the NPPF, a balanced judgement has been undertaken having regard to the significance of the asset and the scale of harm arising from its loss. In this instance, the identified harm is considered to be outweighed by the benefits of the scheme, including the redevelopment of a previously developed site within the settlement boundary, the provision of three dwellings, the contribution towards housing delivery, the removal of unsympathetic modern structures and the introduction of a development which better reflects the character of the village through the use of natural stone materials and appropriate boundary treatments. As such the proposal is considered acceptable in heritage terms and compliant with Core Policies 57 and 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

Amenity

Policy Context

Core Policy 57 (Point vii) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to respect the amenity of existing occupants and ensure appropriate amenity levels for future residents.

Policy DP3 of the NPPF requires development proposals to respond positively to their context and create well- designed liveable places through, *inter alia* appropriate layout and build form.

Assessment

Plot 3

A number of representations have been received raising concerns regarding the impact of the development on neighbouring residential amenity, including potential overlooking, loss of privacy, overbearing impacts, overshadowing and loss of light, particularly in relation to the proposed Plot 3 dwelling. Whilst revisions to the scheme addressed concerns regarding the relationship between Plot 3 and No. 14 High Street, concerns have subsequently been raised regarding the effect of the resited dwelling on neighbouring properties to the south and west.

The relationship between Plot 3 and neighbouring properties has been considered carefully during the course of the application. Following concerns regarding the proximity of the originally proposed dwelling to the northern boundary with No. 14 High Street, the layout was amended such that the single-storey garage is now positioned adjacent to this boundary rather than the main two-storey dwelling. The previous case officer also undertook a site visit to No. 14 High Street to assess the relationship on the ground. Whilst a small area of open land exists adjacent to the home office building near the shared boundary, it was observed that the principal private amenity space associated with the property is located elsewhere within the curtilage. The amended arrangement is therefore considered to significantly reduce the potential for overbearing impacts on No. 14 High Street.

The revised position of Plot 3 has resulted in the dwelling being located closer to neighbouring properties to the south and west. However, substantial separation distances remain. The proposed dwelling would be approximately 25m from No. 22 High Street, approximately 35m from Nos. 18-20 High Street and approximately 30m from No. 30 High Street.

Whilst access to the rear gardens of Nos.16 and 30 High Street was not possible the case officer has visited Nos.18-20 and 22. The photograph below shows the gable end of “building one” (as identified on the annotated plan in the site context section of this report) which forms the boundary of the bottom of No.22’s garden. The occupant requested that as much of the height of this wall as possible be retained to maintain their privacy. Revised plans have been received indicating that this wall would be retained to eaves height. This would ensure that there would be no unacceptable loss of privacy to No.22 (particularly as the garden to this dwelling has mature shrubs) and would also maintain existing levels of security.



This boundary wall and mature planting would also obscure views between proposed Plot 3 and Nos.24 and 30 High Street. The photograph below was taken from No.22's garden. No.24 High Street's boundary (as highlighted in red on the plan) is also well planted.



The photograph below shows existing screening between 18-20 High Street and the application site. This is a mature mixed species hedge. There is a stone boundary wall beyond (on the builder's yard side of the hedge).



It is acknowledged that first-floor windows serving Plot 3 may afford views over parts of neighbouring rear gardens. However, such relationships are not uncommon within established residential areas and a degree of mutual overlooking is to be expected within a built-up village environment. Whilst some perception of overlooking may occur, the separation distances between the dwellings are considered sufficient to prevent unacceptable overlooking of neighbouring dwellings. It is considered that the retention of the existing boundaries, along with the existing mature shrubs and trees in the gardens of the High Street properties, will mitigate against unacceptable loss of privacy.

Plot 3 would be approximately 21m north of the dwelling at No.6 Grove Road and separated from that property by No. 5a Grove Road and intervening residential curtilages. The main bedroom window within Plot 3 would be approximately 8m from the nearest shared garden boundary, while the window serving Bedroom 4 would be approximately 12.5m from that boundary. These distances are relatively limited and would allow views towards part of the neighbouring garden. However, Plot 3 would have more of a side-on relationship with No.6 and as such the windows of Plot 3 would not directly face the neighbouring dwelling, which is substantially further away than the garden boundary. The relationship is considered in the context of an established, closely developed village environment where some mutual overlooking of gardens already occurs.

The revised block plan indicates that the section of existing “building 1” that forms the boundary with No.5a will also be retained to eaves height. This will reduce perceived overlooking towards No.6. It is noted that there is an outbuilding in the rear garden of No.5a, which would also impede views from proposed plot 3 towards No.6.



Plots 1 & 2

With regard to Plots 1 and 2, these would broadly replace the existing dwelling situated at the front of the site. Whilst the proposed dwellings would have greater eaves and ridge heights than the existing chalet bungalow, they would remain positioned to the north of neighbouring properties at Nos. 5a and 6 Grove Road. The nearest dwelling, No. 5a Grove Road, is approximately 7m from Plot 2, whilst No. 6 Grove Road is approximately 20m to the south. Having regard to the orientation of the site, the separation distances involved and, importantly,

the existing residential context, the increase in scale is not considered to result in unacceptable loss of light, overbearing impact or loss of outlook. The first-floor side-elevation windows proposed within the dwellings serve bathroom accommodation. A condition requiring these windows to be permanently obscure glazed and fixed shut below 1.7m above finished floor level would ensure that no unacceptable overlooking arises from these openings..

Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal would alter existing views from neighbouring properties, the planning system does not protect private views. The assessment therefore focuses on the effect of the development upon living conditions rather than the retention of existing outlooks across adjoining land.

Conclusion

The relationship between the proposal and neighbouring properties has been assessed having regard to the submitted plans, site photographs, consultation responses and observations made during site inspections.

Having regard to the amended design, the separation distances involved, the orientation of the proposed dwellings and the opportunity to secure obscure glazing to side-facing bathroom windows, the proposal is not considered to result in unacceptable overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light, overshadowing or overbearing impacts to neighbouring occupiers.

It is acknowledged that the retained vegetation would provide some filtering of views between the existing and proposed dwellings. However, the conclusion that no unacceptable loss of privacy would arise does not rely upon vegetation alone and is principally based upon the orientation of Plot 3, the separation between the proposed and existing dwellings, the established built-up context and the retained boundary structures.

The proposal therefore complies with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the objectives of Policy DP3 of the NPPF.

Highways Impacts and Parking

Policy Context

Core Policies 60 to 64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seek to ensure that development is supported by safe and suitable access arrangements, does not result in unacceptable impacts on highway safety or the operation of the transport network, and promotes sustainable patterns of movement. Development should provide appropriate parking and cycle parking provision and take opportunities to support walking, cycling and other sustainable modes of travel where reasonable and proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposal.

These objectives are supported by the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan, Car Parking Strategy and Cycling Strategy. Additional guidance is provided within the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and Local Transport Note 1/20, which promote high-quality environments for walking and cycling.

Development proposals should also make adequate provision for refuse and recycling storage and ensure that collection arrangements can operate safely and effectively in accordance with the Wiltshire Council Waste Storage and Collection Guidance SPD (2017).

Assessment

The proposal would result in the redevelopment of an existing dwelling and builders' yard to provide three dwellings, representing a net increase of two residential units. Access would continue to be taken from the existing access onto Grove Road and no alterations to the access arrangements are proposed.

Concerns have been raised by the received representations regarding traffic movements on Grove Road. The Local Highway Authority has assessed the proposal and raises no objection. It is acknowledged that visibility from the existing access is restricted, particularly to the right when exiting the site. However, the Highway Officer notes that Grove Road is narrow in nature, which serves to limit vehicle speeds, and that the access is already established. The Highway Officer further notes that the proposed development is not expected to generate a substantial increase in vehicle movements when compared with the existing lawful use of the site, which comprises a dwelling together with a contractor's yard and associated commercial activity.

The proposal provides two off-street parking spaces for each of Plots 1 and 2, together with three parking spaces serving Plot 3. The Local Highway Authority is satisfied that the level of parking provision accords with current Wiltshire parking standards and has confirmed that the parking arrangements are capable of operating satisfactorily. The submitted layout also provides appropriate turning and manoeuvring space within the site.

The site lies within the settlement boundary of Sherston and would utilise an existing access within an established residential area. Refuse and recycling storage areas have been incorporated into the development and collection would continue to take place from Grove Road. Cycle storage and electric vehicle charging provision are also proposed as part of the development.

Following amendments to the scheme, the Local Highway Authority was re-consulted and confirmed that it maintained its position of no objection, subject to conditions requiring a Construction Method Statement and the provision and retention of parking and electric vehicle charging facilities.

Conclusion

The proposal would utilise an existing vehicular access and is not anticipated to result in a severe impact on the local highway network. Adequate parking, turning, cycle storage and electric vehicle charging provision would be provided within the site and the Local Highway Authority raises no objection to the development. Subject to the recommended conditions, the proposal is considered acceptable in highway safety and parking terms and accords with Core Policies 60 and 61 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the transport objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity and ecological networks, requiring development to avoid harm to ecological assets, support habitat restoration and connectivity, integrate biodiversity within site design and deliver measurable Biodiversity Net Gain where required. The policy recognises the importance of protected species, priority habitats, ecological networks and green and blue infrastructure in maintaining and enhancing the natural environment.

The Wiltshire Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (2022-2030) similarly promotes nature recovery, habitat connectivity and the delivery of wider ecosystem services through the planning process.

National policy seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment and support nature recovery. Development proposals should consider the ecological value of a site, conserve and enhance existing habitats and natural features where possible, strengthen ecological networks, minimise adverse impacts on biodiversity and incorporate measures to support priority and threatened species. Development proposals should be supported by appropriate ecological information proportionate to the nature of the site and the potential impacts of the development. Where applicable, development is required to deliver the statutory minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, demonstrated through the Biodiversity Metric and secured through the Biodiversity Gain Plan process.

Assessment

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment was submitted in support of the application. The assessment identified features within the existing buildings with potential to support roosting bats and recommended further survey work. In response, three dusk emergence surveys were subsequently undertaken during the 2025 survey season. These surveys found no evidence of bats roosting within the buildings and concluded that the proposed demolition would not result in the loss of a bat roost.

The Council's Ecologist has reviewed both the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and the subsequent bat emergence surveys and is satisfied that the survey effort undertaken is sufficient to inform determination of the application. Whilst the site and surrounding area provide habitat suitable for foraging and commuting bats, the Ecologist concludes that the proposal would not adversely affect roosting bats, subject to the retention of key boundary features and appropriate mitigation measures.

The Ecologist also notes that retained boundary vegetation and hedgerow features should be protected and enhanced where possible in order to maintain habitat connectivity and function for wildlife. This is consistent with representations received from neighbouring residents regarding the ecological value of vegetation along the western boundary of the site. Appropriate protection of retained vegetation can be secured through landscaping and construction management measures.

The submitted ecological information also includes a precautionary method of working for amphibians and reptiles together with advice regarding nesting birds. Subject to adherence to the submitted ecological documents and standard ecological safeguards during construction, no unacceptable impacts on protected species have been identified.

In relation to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), a statutory biodiversity metric and supporting Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment have been submitted and reviewed by the Council's Ecologist. The submitted baseline habitat information has been accepted as accurate and sufficient to inform the assessment. The Ecologist advises that the statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan condition will apply to the development should planning permission be granted.

The Ecologist further advises that biodiversity enhancements should be incorporated within the development, including features for bats, birds and hedgehogs. Such measures would provide additional ecological benefits and are considered capable of being secured by condition. A lighting condition is also recommended to ensure that any external lighting is designed to minimise impacts on bats and other wildlife.

Conclusion

The Council's Ecologist raises no objection to the proposal subject to conditions. The submitted surveys demonstrate that the development would not adversely affect protected species, including bats, and appropriate safeguards are proposed in relation to nesting birds, amphibians and reptiles. Biodiversity enhancement measures can be secured through condition and the statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan process will ensure that the development delivers the required biodiversity net gain. Subject to the recommended conditions, the proposal is considered to accord with Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the Environment Act 2021 and the biodiversity objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Landscape and Visual Impact

Policy Context

Core Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to protect, conserve and enhance landscape character and quality, requiring development to respond positively to local distinctiveness, landscape features and visual character. Particular importance is attached to conserving the qualities of designated landscapes, including National Landscapes.

The Wiltshire Design Guide SPD promotes a context-led approach to development, encouraging proposals to respond positively to local landscape character, settlement patterns and natural features. The Wiltshire Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy further supports the protection and enhancement of landscape character through habitat connectivity, green infrastructure and nature-based solutions.

National policy seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment and requires development to respond positively to landscape character, local distinctiveness and natural features. Landscape considerations should be assessed alongside biodiversity, heritage and wider environmental objectives. Policy N4 of the NPPF requires development within Protected Landscapes to be appropriately scaled, sensitively located and designed to avoid harm to their statutory purposes and special qualities. Substantial weight must be given to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of these nationally designated landscapes.

The application site lies within the Cotswolds National Landscape. Under Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, decision-makers must seek to further the statutory purposes of National Landscapes. This requires local planning authorities to take reasonable and proportionate steps to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, special qualities and key characteristics of these designated areas when exercising functions that may affect them.

Assessment

The application site lies within the Cotswolds National Landscape and within the Dip-Slope Lowland Landscape Character Type. The Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for this character area recognise that development may be accommodated within existing settlements, provided that it is proportionate in scale, respects settlement character and form, utilises local building materials, retains important landscape features, and integrates successfully into its surroundings.

The site is situated within the established built-up area of Sherston and comprises an existing dwelling, builders' yard, workshop buildings and areas of hardstanding. The proposal would therefore redevelop a previously developed site rather than extend the village into the surrounding countryside. As such, the development would not result in encroachment into the open landscape or adversely affect the wider rural character of the Dip-Slope Lowland landscape character area.

The layout and scale of the development are considered proportionate to its location within the settlement. Existing frontage trees are to be retained and additional planting is proposed, including a new tree within the front part of the site, which will assist in integrating the development into its surroundings. Existing trees and vegetation around the site make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area and, as the site lies within the Sherston Conservation Area, benefit from statutory protection. The proposed layout has been designed to retain the principal trees within the site and is supported by additional landscaping measures that will reinforce the site's verdant character. A detailed landscaping scheme, including boundary treatments, together with measures for the protection of retained trees during construction, can be secured by condition. Subject to these measures, the proposal is considered to accord with the Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for the area and Policy NE14 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan, ensuring the continued contribution of trees, landscaping and boundary features to the character and appearance of both the site and its surroundings.

Particular weight is given to the revised materials palette proposed. The development would utilise natural Cotswold stone, natural stone detailing, natural grey slate roofing and stone boundary walls. These amendments represent a significant improvement over the originally proposed materials and respond positively to the local vernacular and the special qualities of the Cotswolds National Landscape, including the importance of limestone as a defining characteristic of the area.

The proposal would also replace the existing utilitarian builders' yard buildings, workshop structures and areas of hardstanding with a more coherent residential form of development. Whilst change would inevitably occur, views of the site are largely experienced within the context of the surrounding settlement rather than the wider open landscape. The development

is therefore not considered to adversely affect important landscape characteristics, key views or the scenic quality of the National Landscape.

In considering the proposal, regard has been had to the statutory duty under Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 to seek to further the purposes of the Cotswolds National Landscape. The proposal redevelops an existing developed site within the settlement boundary, retains existing landscape features, introduces additional planting and incorporates materials that better reflect local distinctiveness. Consequently, the development is considered to conserve and enhance the natural beauty and special qualities of the National Landscape in a manner proportionate to its scale and location.

Conclusion

Having regard to the site's location within the built-up area of Sherston, the previously developed nature of the land, the retention of existing landscape features, the proposed landscaping and the use of high-quality locally appropriate materials, the proposal is not considered to harm the character, appearance or scenic beauty of the Cotswolds National Landscape. The development would conserve the landscape character of the area and, through the replacement of utilitarian structures with a more sympathetic form of development, would result in a modest enhancement to the appearance of the site. The proposal therefore accords with Core Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework and the statutory purposes of the Cotswolds National Landscape

Land Contamination

The site has previously accommodated a builders' yard and associated storage uses. Although there is no evidence before the Council to indicate that the land is affected by contamination, having regard to the historic use of the site and the introduction of residential development, a precautionary condition relating to any previously unidentified contamination is considered appropriate.

Agreement to pre-commencement conditions

This recommendation includes pre-commencement planning conditions relating to tree protection measures, Construction Method Statement and ecological enhancement details. In accordance with Section 100ZA of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning (Pre-commencement Conditions) Regulations 2018, the Local Planning Authority formally notified the applicant/agent of the proposed condition(s) and sought their agreement. Written confirmation of agreement was received from the applicant on 18.08.2026.

PLANNING BALANCE

The site lies within the settlement boundary of Sherston, identified as a Large Village under the Wiltshire Core Strategy. The proposal would redevelop a previously developed site within the built-up area of the village and is therefore consistent with the spatial strategy established by Core Policies 1 and 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. The principle of residential development in this location is acceptable.

Policies S3 and S4 of the NPPF establish a presumption in favour of sustainable development within settlements. In accordance with Policy S4, development proposals should be approved

unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects when assessed against the policies of the Framework. In this case, no conflict has been identified with the relevant policies of the development plan or the Framework that would indicate permission should be refused.

The proposal would deliver a number of benefits. These include:

- The redevelopment of a previously developed brownfield site within the settlement boundary of a sustainable Large Village;
- The provision of three market dwellings, resulting in a net gain of two dwellings;
- A contribution towards housing delivery at a time when Wiltshire Council can demonstrate only a 2.8-year housing land supply;
- The replacement of utilitarian builders' yard buildings and associated hardstanding with a high-quality residential development;
- Improvements to the appearance of the site through the use of natural Cotswold stone, natural stone detailing, stone boundary walls, landscaping and ecological enhancement measures;
- The retention and enhancement of key landscape features and delivery of biodiversity net gain through the statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan process.

The proposal would also preserve the character and appearance of the Sherston Conservation Area, preserve the setting of nearby listed buildings, avoid unacceptable impacts on neighbouring residential amenity, result in no unacceptable highway safety impacts, and conserve the character and scenic beauty of the Cotswolds National Landscape. These matters are therefore neutral in the planning balance.

The principal adverse effect identified is the loss of the nineteenth-century workshop building identified within the submitted Heritage Impact Assessment as a non-designated heritage asset. The proposal would result in the total loss of this asset and this weighs against the proposal. However, for the reasons set out within the heritage assessment, the building is considered to be of modest local significance, derives its significance principally from evidential and historic value, is not identified within any adopted local list, the Sherston Conservation Area Statement or the Sherston Neighbourhood Plan, and makes only a limited contribution to the wider character and appearance of the Conservation Area due to its enclosed backland location and limited visibility from the public realm. Having undertaken the balanced judgement required by Policy HE7 of the NPPF, the harm arising from the loss of the asset is considered to be outweighed by the benefits of the proposal.

Taking all matters into account, the benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the identified harm. Furthermore, having regard to Policy S4 of the NPPF, it cannot reasonably be concluded that the adverse effects of granting permission would substantially outweigh the benefits of the development. The proposal therefore represents sustainable development and accords with the development plan when read as a whole.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development would redevelop a previously developed site within the settlement boundary of Sherston to provide three dwellings in a sustainable location. The scheme would

be of an appropriate design, preserve the character and appearance of the Sherston Conservation Area, preserve the setting of nearby listed buildings, safeguard residential amenity, avoid unacceptable highway impacts, conserve the Cotswolds National Landscape and provide appropriate ecological mitigation and enhancement measures.

Whilst the proposal would result in the loss of a non-designated heritage asset of modest significance, this harm is considered to be outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme, including housing delivery and environmental improvements to the site.

For the reasons set out above, the proposal is considered to accord with the Development Plan taken as a whole and with the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework. Accordingly, planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions set out below.

RECOMMENDATION: That Planning Permission be GRANTED, subject to conditions

1. Time limit

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

2. Approved plans

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

Proposed Ground and First Floor Plans and Elevations - Plot 3 334-103 RevD
received 30 Apr 2026

Proposed Ground and First Floor Plans and Elevations - Plots 1 and 2 334-102 RevD
received 30 Apr 2026

Proposed Street Scenes 334-104 RevD received 30 Apr 2026

Heritage Impact Assessment received 30 Apr 2026

Site Location Plan, Proposed Site Block Plan and Boundary Wall Details 334-101
Rev E received 7 September 2026

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. Materials

No development shall commence on site until the exact details and samples of the materials to be used for the external walls and roofs have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: The application contained insufficient information to enable this matter to be considered prior to granting planning permission and the matter is required to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority before development commences in order that the development is undertaken in an acceptable manner, in the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area

4. Obscure glazing

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), the first floor bathroom windows within the side elevations of Plots 1, 2 and 3, as shown on the approved plans, shall be glazed with obscure glass to Pilkington Privacy Level 4 or 5, or an equivalent level of obscurity, and shall be fixed shut below a height of 1.7m above the finished floor level of the relevant room.

The windows shall thereafter be retained in that condition at all times.

REASON: In the interests of neighbouring residential amenity and to safeguard privacy.

5. Parking and Turning

No dwelling shall be occupied until the associated parking and turning areas shown on the approved plans have been provided, including two parking spaces for each of Plots 1 and 2 and three parking spaces for Plot 3. At least one electric vehicle charging point shall be provided for each dwelling before its first occupation. The parking, turning and electric vehicle charging facilities shall thereafter be retained and maintained for their intended purposes.

REASON: To ensure that adequate provision is made for parking within the site in the interests of highway safety and that a satisfactory standard is established to meet future needs.

6. CMS

No development shall commence on site (including any works of demolition), until a Construction Method Statement, which shall include the following:

- the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
- loading and unloading of plant and materials;
- storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
- hours of construction, including deliveries;

has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The approved Statement shall be complied with in full throughout the construction period. The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in accordance with the approved construction method statement.

REASON: The application contained insufficient information to enable this matter to be considered prior to granting planning permission and the matter is required to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority before development commences in order that the development is undertaken in an acceptable manner, in the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

7. Landscaping

No development above slab level shall take place until a hard and soft landscaping scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The landscaping scheme shall include:

- existing trees and vegetation to be retained;
- proposed trees, hedgerows and planting, including species, sizes and densities;
- hard landscaping materials;
- proposed boundary treatments; and

- a programme for implementation.

The approved landscaping scheme shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the first occupation of any dwelling or completion of the development, whichever is the sooner.

Any trees, shrubs or plants which, within a period of five years from completion of the approved landscaping scheme, die, are removed, become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and to safeguard the character and appearance of the area, the Sherston Conservation Area and the Cotswolds National Landscape.

8. Boundary Walls

The existing stone boundary walls identified for retention on the approved plans shall be retained and protected throughout the construction period. No section of retained wall shall be removed other than where shown on the approved plans or otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To safeguard the character and appearance of the Sherston Conservation Area and to protect neighbour amenity.

9. Tree and hedge protection

No development, including demolition, groundworks, site clearance or the storage of materials, shall commence until details of tree protection measures for all trees and hedgerows to be retained have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include protective fencing and, where necessary, ground protection measures in accordance with *BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations*.

The approved tree and hedge protection measures shall be installed before any works commence on site and shall be retained for the duration of the construction period. No materials, machinery, spoil, chemicals, fuel, soil or other substances shall be stored within the protected areas and no excavation or level changes shall take place within those areas unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To safeguard trees and vegetation which contribute to the character and appearance of the area and the Sherston Conservation Area.

10. Ecology - Compliance with submitted documents

The development will be carried out in strict accordance with the following documents:

- Ecological Survey Report (Bats). 06 October 2025. BatCraft. Ref. NWP/ESR-6/10/25;
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment. 21 January 2025. Arbtech Consulting Ltd;

- The Statutory Biodiversity Metric. 06 February 2025;
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment. 06 February 2025. Arbtech Consulting Ltd.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and for the protection, mitigation and enhancement of biodiversity.

11. Ecological Enhancements

Prior to the commencement of any works, including vegetation removal and demolition, details of the number, design and locations of ecological enhancement features including bat boxes, bird boxes, and hedgehog hibernacula shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Authority. The approved details shall be implemented for the lifetime of the development and before completion of the final works.

REASON: To provide mitigation /enhancement for biodiversity.

12. Lighting

All lighting provided on site shall be in accordance with the appropriate Environmental Zone standards set out by the Institute of Lighting Engineers in their publication GN01:2021, 'Guidance for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light' (ILP, 2021), and Guidance note GN08/23 "Bats and artificial lighting at night", issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals.

REASON: In the interests of the amenities of the area and to minimize impacts on biodiversity caused by light spillage to areas above and outside the development site.

13. Contaminated Land

If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority) shall be carried out until a remediation strategy detailing how this contamination will be dealt with has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.

REASON: To ensure that the development does not contribute to, and is not put at unacceptable risk from or adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of water pollution from previously unidentified contamination sources at the development site. This is in line with Policy P2 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

INFORMATIVES:

Protected Species

The applicant should note that under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) it is an offence to disturb or harm any protected species including for example, breeding birds and reptiles. The protection offered to some species such as bats, extends beyond the individual animals to the places they use for shelter or resting. Please note that this consent does not override the statutory protection afforded to any such species. In the event that your proposals could potentially affect a protected species you should seek the advice of a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist and consider the need for a licence from Natural England prior to

commencing works. Please see Natural England's website for further information on protected species.

Materials Samples

Please note that Council offices do not have the facility to receive material samples. Please deliver material samples to site and inform the Planning Officer where they are to be found