

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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Application No: PL/2026/05065
Proposed boundary fence and landscaping
60 The Green, Poulshot, Devizes, SN10 1RT

Please find following comments in respect of the above application(s).

Recommendations:

☐	No comment
☐	Support in principle subject to amendments to the scheme (as set out below)
☐	Support subject to conditions (as set out below)
☒	Object (for reasons set out below)
☐	No objections

Scope of comments: the following comments relate to the built historic environment.

National Policy and guidance: From the point of view of the historic environment the main statutory tests are set out within the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66 (PP) require that **special regard** be given to the desirability of preserving or listed buildings, *their settings* or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 also requires the Council to pay **special attention** to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of designated Conservation Areas.

The NPPF (August 2026) sets out Government planning policy for England. Chapter 20, *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*, recognises heritage assets as an irreplaceable resource. Heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, with harm avoided unless there is a clear and convincing justification. Decision-makers are required to apply a balanced approach, giving substantial weight to the conservation of heritage assets and weighing any harm to significance against the public benefits of the proposal.

Chapter 5 of the NPPF sets out policies for "Meeting the challenge of climate change" and gives substantial weight to the benefits of improving the energy efficiency of existing buildings and/or drawing energy from district heat networks, renewable and low carbon sources (including through the installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights).

National Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on interpreting the NPPF.

Historic England's Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2008) provides policy and guidance for the "sustainable management of the historic environment". Additional relevant guidance on the application of policies set out in the NPPF is contained within their publications:

- Historic Environment Good Practice Planning Advice Note 2 – Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015)
- Historic Environment Good Practice Planning Advice Note 3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets 2nd edition (2017)
- Historic England Advice Note 2 – Making changes to Heritage Assets (2025)
- Historic England Advice Note 18 – Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency (2026)
- Traditional Windows: their care, repair and upgrading (2017)

"The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 3" (HE GPA3) which notes that "The importance [of setting] lies in what the setting contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance."

Local Policy: The Council's Core Strategy Policy CP58 'Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment' requires that "designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner appropriate to their significance." It is also required that distinctive elements of Wiltshire's historic environment, including non-designated heritage assets, which contribute to a sense of local character and identity will be conserved, and where possible enhanced.

The Council's Core Strategy CP 57: Ensuring high-quality design requires a high quality of design in all new developments. Proposals are required to "demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire through (amongst other things) "enhancing local distinctiveness by responding to the value of the natural and historic environment, relating positively to its landscape setting and the existing pattern of development" and "responding positively to the existing townscape and landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate the building into its setting."

Proposal: The proposed works are to install a new boundary fence and undertake associated landscaping works, following a previously refused scheme (PL/2026/00322). The existing boundary treatment is therefore unauthorised.

Relevant planning history: The previous application was for the retention of the existing (unauthorised) fence, which was refused due to harm to the setting of the listed building and the character of the conservation area.

Issues: impact on the listed building, impact on the setting of neighbouring listed buildings, impact on the conservation area.

Information considered/provided: Policy HE5 of the NPPF requires applicants to assess the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including the contribution made by their setting, and to identify the likely effects of the development on that significance. Sufficient information should be provided to enable a clear understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and its setting, and the impact of the proposal upon it.

Decision-makers must be satisfied that assessments accurately reflect the effects on heritage assets caused by development proposals and in this case the applications are accompanied by a Design & Heritage Statement. This provides some consideration of the listed dwelling but makes limited reference to the character of the conservation area.

Significance of assets and contribution of setting: The NPPF defines significance as the "value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be

archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting." Historic England assesses significance in a similar manner, referring to evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal values of a place.

The interest may be architectural, or historic as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 S 1.

In this case the significance of the building lies largely with its historic fabric and vernacular construction and its setting within a rural village that has altered little over the years, with relatively small piecemeal changes occurring organically, which still retains significant aesthetic and architectural interest, and which contribute to the character of the conservation area.

The property sits on the corner of a row of houses, which are a mix of age, architectural styles and scale, with the application dwelling being one of the smaller dwellings within this grouping. Many of the larger houses rear gardens extend down to the Byway which runs parallel to the houses and connects to the Bridleway that runs to the south elevation of the application site. Whilst the surfaces have an applied finish, it retains a rural atmosphere, with the slightly dispersed development that is set around the large Green.

As noted in the previous comments, the *'very location of this attractive cottage within the Conservation Area makes any development here extremely limited. The Green lies to the southeast. The south gable end is particularly prominent being on a corner and facing the junction where Drewitts Lane meets The Street. The site is extremely visible from the west, southwest, south and southeast – a number of listed and significant unlisted buildings also look upon it.'*



View down bridleway to byway.



View from byway towards the rear elevations of the Green



Views from bridleway towards the Byway and the Green.

Assessment: The current fence was erected following the works to reinstate the ditch following the flooding of the dwelling in 2024/25 (no LBC received for any works undertaken).

The submitted application has revised the scheme and is now proposing to create a 1.8m boundary treatment of willow panels to the south elevation of the property to create 'a secure and well designed boundary' and to form privacy to the property from the bridleway.

The previous (refused) scheme was for the retention of the close boarded fence, with the revised scheme proposing to reduce the height to 1.8m. The creation of a 1.8m high fence is generally not supported within the historic environment due to their solid nature which has a negative impact on the setting of the heritage asset. The solid appearance and height introduce an urban form, which is considered to result in harm to the setting of the listed building, particularly in a sensitive setting such as this site.

The height and dominance of the fence is considered to be increased due to the proposed length of the fence. Part of the fence will be screened by a new native hedge, which would reduce the dominance of the fence, but it would still be visible. There is the concern that due to the limited space between the ditch and the fence line, and it is unclear if there is sufficient space for a hedge to become established, or the hedge progressing into the ditch again, increasing the risk of further flooding to the property as a fence (close boarded or willow) will offer limited protection from flood water.

Part of the submitted justification for the works is security. There has been no discussion or consideration for the protection offered by the ditch and the hedge which would reduce the ease the access onto the property. The creation of the hedge allows for limited visual views into the garden when walking past but does allow for movement to be seen. The creation of the hedge is a more natural and rural form of boundary treatment. When undertaking the site visit, it was noted that the houses which back onto the byway and many others have limited boundary treatments, and do not have ditches or hedging offering additional protection but retain a post and rail fence or similar treatment. It is therefore unclear why there is perceived to be a higher security risk to this property.

The submitted information also advised that there was a requirement of a fence for the protection of children and pets. This protection could be offered by a lower-level fence and boundary treatment that would result in less impact to the setting of the designated heritage assets.

There is a common perception regarding privacy within gardens, however, there is no planning requirements to create private amenity, though there is a presumption that the owners should be able to enjoy the garden.

The justification is considered to be a private benefit, rather than a public benefit by the Planning Inspectorate, as is increased privacy (APP/Z1775/W/25/3360777). The Inspector in this case also considers the importance of being able to see the listed building, and its setting, and assess that a tall fence would result in harm. As in this application, the creation of the fence does not result in the property from continuing its function as a residential dwelling. Therefore, the proposed 1.8m, will panel fence is considered to cause harm to the setting of the listed building and the character of the conservation area, and there are no public benefits (as per the NPPF) that are considered to outweigh this harm.

If flooding is an on-going concern, then consideration of a solid wall, such as a stone/brick wall could be considered, but this would need to be of a low-level height (max. 1m) and designed to be suitable for a rural village location, as this would offer better flood protection if required.

Summary & conclusion: The NPPF confirms that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). It makes clear that any harm to a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification.

The proposals will result in harm to the building via the negative impact on the setting of the listed building and the character of the conservation area (designated heritage assets). Indeed, the wording of the NPPF and the 'special regard' by Section 66 of the Act requires that any level harm caused should be taken seriously.

Whilst policy HE6.4 allows that a level of harm may be offset by public benefits, which could include conservation benefits, in this case no objective justification has been provided for the works and it has not been demonstrated that the works will result in any public benefit. As a result, the proposals fail to meet with the requirements of current conservation legislation, policy or guidance and I therefore recommend refusal.