

To: Wiltshire Council – Planning Department

**Re: Objection to planning application – Nonsuch House and Nonsuch Estate
Westbrook, Bromham, Chippenham SN15 2ED**

Planning application reference: [PL/2026/04847](#)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to formally object to the above planning application.

I recognise the importance of restoring and securing the future of a Grade II* listed building such as Nonsuch House. However, I have significant concerns that the scale and nature of the wider development proposed goes considerably beyond the restoration and sensitive reuse of the historic buildings and would result in a substantial intensification of activity across the estate.

My objection relates to the cumulative impact of the proposed development, including the proposed boutique hotel, health and wellbeing facilities, staff accommodation, new estate-management buildings, associated access and landscaping works and the proposed replacement/new dwelling at Denbanks.

I ask Wiltshire Council to consider the following matters carefully.

1. Cumulative scale and intensification of the development

The proposal should not be considered simply as the restoration of Nonsuch House and conversion of existing buildings.

The application proposes a substantial commercial hospitality operation together with associated new development, including hotel accommodation, health and wellbeing facilities, staff accommodation, access improvements, landscaping and additional estate buildings, alongside a replacement/new dwelling.

The cumulative effect is therefore a significant intensification of the use of this rural estate.

The Council should assess the development as a whole and consider whether the scale of new development is genuinely necessary to secure the conservation of Nonsuch House, or whether the heritage restoration is effectively being used to justify a substantially larger commercial development.

The applicant's own viability information appears to recognise that the justification for new development needs to demonstrate why development beyond the conversion of existing buildings is necessary and why the proposed additional development represents the minimum necessary to secure the heritage objectives.

I ask the Council to scrutinise this justification rigorously and to establish whether reasonable alternatives involving less new development have genuinely been considered.

2. Impact on the Grade II* listed building and its setting

Nonsuch House is a Grade II* listed building and therefore represents a particularly significant heritage asset.

The proposed use as a commercial boutique hotel, together with associated facilities and infrastructure, has the potential to materially alter the way in which the historic buildings and their setting are experienced and used.

The impact should not be limited to physical alterations to Nonsuch House itself. The Council should consider the effect of the entire development on the historic setting of the listed building, including:

- new buildings;
- wellness and leisure facilities;
- staff accommodation;
- parking;
- access arrangements;
- lighting;
- servicing and deliveries;
- landscaping;
- increased visitor activity; and
- the increased intensity of use across the estate.

The applicant should demonstrate clearly that the proposed development represents an appropriate and genuinely sensitive way of securing the long-term conservation of the heritage asset.

Where harm is identified, the Council should ensure that the claimed public and heritage benefits are sufficiently substantial, demonstrable and proportionate to that harm.

3. Public rights of way – BROM1A

There are significant concerns regarding the impact on Public Bridleway BROM1A.

BROM1A is a regularly used public route, including by horse riders, dog walkers and pedestrians. It is therefore important that the impact of additional vehicle movements is considered in terms of the safety and amenity of vulnerable users.

The Council's own Countryside Access Development Officer has identified that the proposed development will result in increased vehicle use of BROM1A during demolition and construction and subsequently through occupation of the proposed dwelling.

The Officer has identified the need for:

- a condition survey before works commence;
- a further condition survey following completion;
- potential improvement to the existing surface;
- appropriate visibility at the proposed access;

- vehicles entering and leaving in a forward direction;
- no reversing down the bridleway;
- no reversing onto the bridleway;
- priority being given to vulnerable users;
- confirmation that the applicant has the necessary private rights to drive vehicles over the relevant section;
- management of the hedgerows;
- prevention of surface water running onto the bridleway;
- restrictions on the placement of building materials; and
- appropriate arrangements should the route need to be temporarily closed.

These are not merely theoretical concerns. They demonstrate that the proposed development creates identifiable impacts on an existing public right of way.

Particularly importantly, the Countryside Access Development Officer states that BROM1A is likely to be used as a route to Bromham by **hotel staff and hotel residents**, as well as by local residents using the proposed facilities.

A £10,000 Section 106 contribution has consequently been requested towards upgrading the surface of the path.

This demonstrates that the impact on BROM1A extends beyond the proposed dwelling and includes the wider hotel and associated facilities.

The Council should therefore properly assess whether the existing bridleway is capable of safely accommodating the significant increase in activity generated by the development, particularly given its established use by horse riders and other vulnerable users.

A financial contribution should not in itself be treated as resolving the underlying issue of whether the proposed intensity of development is appropriate.

4. Public Footpath BROM2

There is also a direct conflict between the proposed development and Public Footpath BROM2.

The Council's Countryside Access Development Officer expressly states that:

“The restaurant part of the welcome building and the car park will obstruct the route of Public Footpath BROM2.”

The Officer confirms that the footpath would therefore need to be diverted for the development to proceed in the form shown.

This is significant because the proposal has not simply been designed around the existing public rights of way. A component of the proposed development would physically obstruct an existing public footpath.

The Council should carefully consider whether the proposed diversion is appropriate and whether an equally convenient and attractive alternative route can genuinely be provided.

The existing public rights of way form part of the character and recreational value of the area and should not be treated as an inconvenience that can simply be moved to accommodate the proposed commercial development.

5. Existing intensification and cumulative impact

The impact of the proposed development should also be considered against the changes that have already taken place on the estate.

The former garages, stables and office block to the rear of the property have already been developed, resulting in an increase in activity associated with the site.

There has also been a significant increase in the depositing/tipping of inert material on the land.

I ask the Council to establish the nature, extent and planning status of this activity where relevant, particularly insofar as it may affect the landscape, drainage, ecology, public rights of way or character of the site.

The existing changes are relevant when considering the cumulative impact of further development.

The Council should not assess the current application in isolation from the activity and development that has already occurred on the estate.

6. Highway safety and conflict with vulnerable users

The proposed development will generate vehicle movements from:

- hotel guests;
- hotel staff;
- visitors to the health and wellbeing facilities;
- deliveries;
- servicing and maintenance vehicles;
- contractors;
- construction traffic; and
- occupants and visitors associated with the proposed dwelling.

These movements must be considered alongside the existing use of the surrounding rural roads and public rights of way.

The potential conflict between vehicles and horse riders, dog walkers and pedestrians using BROM1A is of particular concern.

The Council should require robust evidence that the access arrangements are safe and suitable for the scale and intensity of use proposed.

7. Ecology and biodiversity

The submitted ecological information also raises concerns.

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal identifies significant ecological constraints associated with the site, including confirmed bat roosts and buildings with further potential for bat roosting, as well as potential habitat for birds, reptiles, amphibians, dormice, badgers and great crested newts.

The assessment is described as preliminary and recommends further ecological surveys.

The Council should ensure that all necessary surveys have been completed and are sufficiently current before determining the application, particularly given the extensive conversion works, demolition, new construction, landscaping and lighting proposed.

The presence of a Grade II* listed building and numerous historic outbuildings also makes the potential impact on bats particularly important.

The ecological impact of the development should not be assumed to be adequately addressed simply through proposed mitigation or biodiversity offsetting.

8. Biodiversity Net Gain

The submitted Biodiversity Net Gain assessment identifies a biodiversity loss under the development as assessed.

The Council should therefore require the applicant to demonstrate clearly how the statutory biodiversity requirements will be met and how any proposed biodiversity gains will actually be delivered, secured and maintained.

The proposed development should not be treated as delivering a biodiversity benefit merely because additional habitat creation or off-site measures may be capable of being provided in the future.

The Council should also consider the existing ecological value of the estate and the potential effects of construction, lighting, increased human activity and landscaping on those habitats.

9. Landscape and visual impact

The proposal introduces a significant amount of new development and associated infrastructure into a rural estate.

The Council should carefully consider the cumulative visual impact of:

- the proposed health and wellbeing buildings;
- staff accommodation;
- estate-management buildings;
- access improvements;
- parking;
- landscaping;
- lighting;

- recreational facilities; and
- the replacement dwelling at Denbanks.

The visual effect should be assessed not simply from within the estate but from surrounding public rights of way and other publicly accessible locations.

The fact that development is associated with a historic estate does not automatically mean that additional buildings and commercial activity will preserve its rural character.

10. Noise, activity and disturbance

The proposed use as a boutique hotel and health and wellbeing destination will inevitably generate a substantially different pattern of activity from the existing use of the estate.

The Council should consider the potential impact arising from:

- guest arrivals and departures;
- staff movements;
- deliveries;
- waste collection;
- servicing;
- outdoor activity;
- wellness and leisure facilities;
- lighting;
- plant and equipment;
- increased pedestrian activity; and
- any events or functions associated with the hotel.

The impact should be considered in the context of the rural setting and the existing quiet recreational use of the surrounding public rights of way.

11. Denbanks and the proposed replacement dwelling

The proposed demolition of Denbanks and erection of a replacement dwelling should be assessed as a separate component of the application as well as part of the cumulative development.

The Council should establish whether the proposed dwelling is genuinely a replacement of comparable scale and impact, or whether the proposal would result in a substantial increase in development within the rural landscape.

The access implications are particularly important given the proposed use of BROM1A.

The Countryside Access Officer has already identified a number of specific requirements associated with the access to the proposed dwelling, including the need to establish private rights of access, adequate visibility, safe vehicle manoeuvring and protection of the bridleway.

These matters should be resolved satisfactorily rather than assumed to be capable of being dealt with later.

12. Cumulative impact

I ask the Council to consider the cumulative impact of the entire proposal rather than assessing each individual building or element in isolation.

Taken together, the application proposes:

- restoration and commercial change of use of a Grade II* listed building;
- conversion of numerous associated buildings;
- a substantial boutique hotel;
- health and wellbeing facilities;
- staff accommodation;
- new estate-management buildings;
- significant landscaping and access works;
- increased vehicle and pedestrian activity;
- changes to existing public rights of way; and
- demolition and replacement of a dwelling.

The resulting development represents a significant change in the scale, intensity and nature of activity across the estate.

The existing development of the former garages, stables and office block and the increased activity and depositing of inert material on the land should also be taken into account when assessing the cumulative effect.

Conclusion

I fully recognise the importance of finding a sustainable future for Nonsuch House and support the principle of appropriate restoration of a significant Grade II* heritage asset.

However, I do not consider that the proposed level of commercial, residential, recreational and associated development has yet been demonstrated to be necessary, proportionate or acceptable in this sensitive rural and historic setting.

In particular, I ask Wiltshire Council to give significant weight to:

1. the cumulative scale and intensification of the proposal;
2. the impact on the Grade II* listed building and its setting;
3. the direct impact on BROM1A and BROM2;
4. the anticipated increase in use of BROM1A by hotel guests and staff;
5. the existing use of BROM1A by horse riders, dog walkers and pedestrians;
6. the physical obstruction and proposed diversion of BROM2;
7. the need for significant rights-of-way improvements identified by the Council's own Countryside Access Officer;
8. highway safety and conflict between vehicles and vulnerable users;
9. ecological constraints and the need for further survey work;

10. the biodiversity implications of the proposal;
11. landscape and visual impact;
12. noise and disturbance arising from the proposed commercial use;
13. the cumulative impact of development already undertaken on the estate; and
14. whether the proposed new development is genuinely the minimum necessary to secure the restoration and long-term conservation of Nonsuch House.

I respectfully request that the application be **refused unless and until the Council is satisfied, on the basis of robust and current evidence, that these matters can be satisfactorily addressed and that the overall scale and intensity of the development is appropriate for the site and its surroundings.**

I ask that this letter be recorded as a formal objection to the application and that all of the matters raised above are taken into consideration when determining the application.

Yours faithfully,