

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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Officer's Name: Sarah Hill
Officer's Title: Senior Planning Officer

Application No: PL/2026/03743
Site Address Sunnyside, East Knoyle SP3 6AH
Proposal: Demolition and erection of 2 dwellings

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

Recommendations:

☐	No comment
☐	Support in principle
☐	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.

Policy: From the point of view of the historic environment the main statutory tests are set out within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Sections 16 (LBC) and 66 (PP) require that **special regard** be given to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) August 2026 sets out government policy, including in respect of the historic environment. National Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on interpreting the NPPF.

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.

Historic England Advice Note 2 – Making changes to Heritage Assets illustrates the application of policies set out in the NPPF in determining applications for PP and LBC.

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."

Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy Policy CP57 'Ensuring high quality design and place shaping': A high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings. Development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality.

Site and assets considered:

Sunnyside is an attached cottage that lies adjacent to the boundary of the East Knoyle Conservation Area. Several listed buildings lie to the north of the site, notably the Old Rectory, Little Thatch, Paddock Wood and Allens, all grade II.

Planning History

Applications in 1989/90, erection of the house to the north

Proposal

The demolition of existing dwelling and the erection of 2no detached dwellings including parking, hard and soft landscaping and associated works.

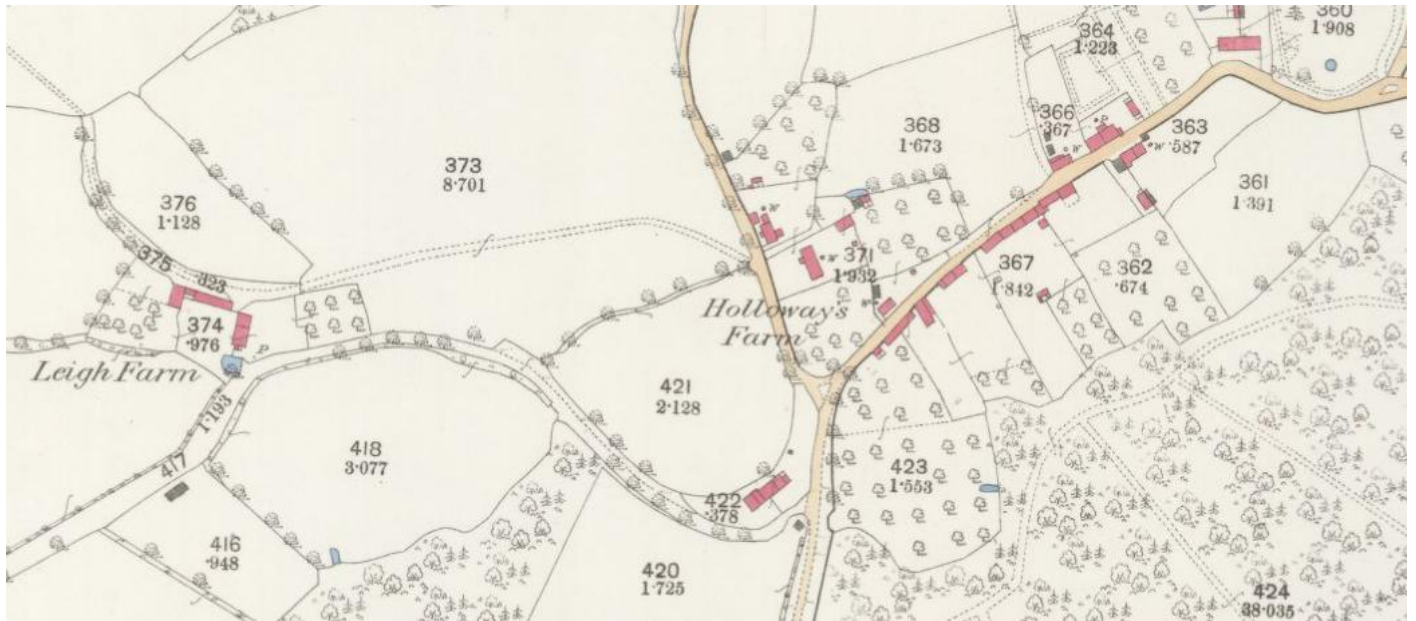
Assessment

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.

The application provides no assessment of the building's heritage significance. The exclusion of Sunnyside from the CA is not immediately explicable. The boundary of the CA extends along its frontage and the building to the north wasn't present at the time of designation in 1975. Sunnyside is part of a longer building that appears to have been further subdivided historically. It is present on the 1840 tithe map as a single dwelling, by 1886 (OS 1st ed) it appears to be multiple cottages in a row. A building is also shown on Andrews' & Dury's 1773 map of Wiltshire, perhaps serving as a lodge or staff cottage, to Lower Lye Farm to the west (also a listed building).





OS 1886/7. Sunnyside & Bluebell sit at the end of a former drive to Leigh Farm (now Lower Lye) and its plot extends to the Holloway road junction.

The building has been extended to the NE (front-right) with a matching two-storeyed extension in the mid-late C20, has concrete tiles and recent plastic windows, but is nevertheless entirely legible as a building dating from before the mid C19, and quite is possibly late C18. Its simple linear form in combination with Bluebell (which has a shallower pitched roof with Welsh slate) and the painted historic brickwork present a pleasingly traditional welcome to this entrance of the CA, the cottages' orientation is such that it faces both its original drive and the street at the same time. There is limited intervisibility between the site and the listed buildings due to the recent tendency to let rural and even garden hedges grow substantially higher than 20 years ago.

The application proposes to demolish this building, but leave Bluebell Cottage unaltered. Apart from the briefest of comments regarding damp, which can be addressed, nothing has been provided to demonstrate that the building is incapable of repair or has any structural issues. No details have been provided with regard to the works to make good the gable of Bluebell, which would certainly require a structural engineer's input and we would want to be assured that Bluebell would be adequately protected.

The building exhibits a number of characteristics that suggest it should, until the LPA is convinced otherwise, be treated as a non-designated heritage asset. Its age and traditional form contribute to the streetscene and entrance to the CA (while being outside of it), and there appears to be more to be learned about the origins of a building on this site and its relationship with Lower Lye. If it were in the CA I would have no hesitation in saying it was a building that contributed positively to the character of the CA.

With regard to the proposed replacement dwellings, these would not preserve the setting of the CA nor that of the undemolished Bluebell: the 1980s Tironui is rather incongruous in its location but the addition of two further dramatically modern dwellings into a very cramped site, presenting no true elevations to the street, would seem inappropriate for the rural location more generally, with reference to CP57.

Summary & conclusion:

HH7:3 Decisions on non-designated heritage assets requires that "Where a development proposal would cause substantial harm to, or the total loss of, the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, it should only be supported where the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefits of the proposal, having regard to the scale of the harm or loss and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset."

The demolition of Sunnyside, being one of a pair of attached cottages, is certainly substantial harm to the NDHA. The harm to the setting of the East Knoyle CA, both by the loss of the historic building and its replacement with buildings as proposed, would not be substantial but would nevertheless be notable. I am not currently aware of benefits of the proposal with regard to the scheme that may serve to outweigh the harm identified.