

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

7 October 2026

Jocelyn Sage
Senior Conservation Officer
Wiltshire Council Conservation (South
and West)

Officer's Name: Hayley Clark
Officer's Title: Senior Planning Officer

Application No: PL/2026/05334

Pitts Farm, Sedgehill, Shaftesbury, SP7 9JB

Demolition of existing barn 'D', creation of new access to highway, construction of new 3 bed dwelling and change of use of land

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

Recommendations:

☐	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) requires 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 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 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 following points are taken from the Historic England document "The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 3" (HE GPA3) that are considered to be particularly relevant:

HE GPA3 Part 1:

"The NPPF makes it clear that the setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset."

"The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. ...views of or from an asset will play an important part..."

"While setting can be mapped in the context of an individual application or proposal, it cannot be definitively and permanently described for all time as a spatially bounded area or as lying within a set distance of a heritage asset. This is because the surroundings of a heritage asset will change over time."

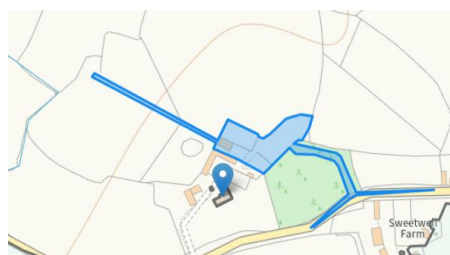
"The importance lies in what the setting contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance."

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."

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.

The Site:

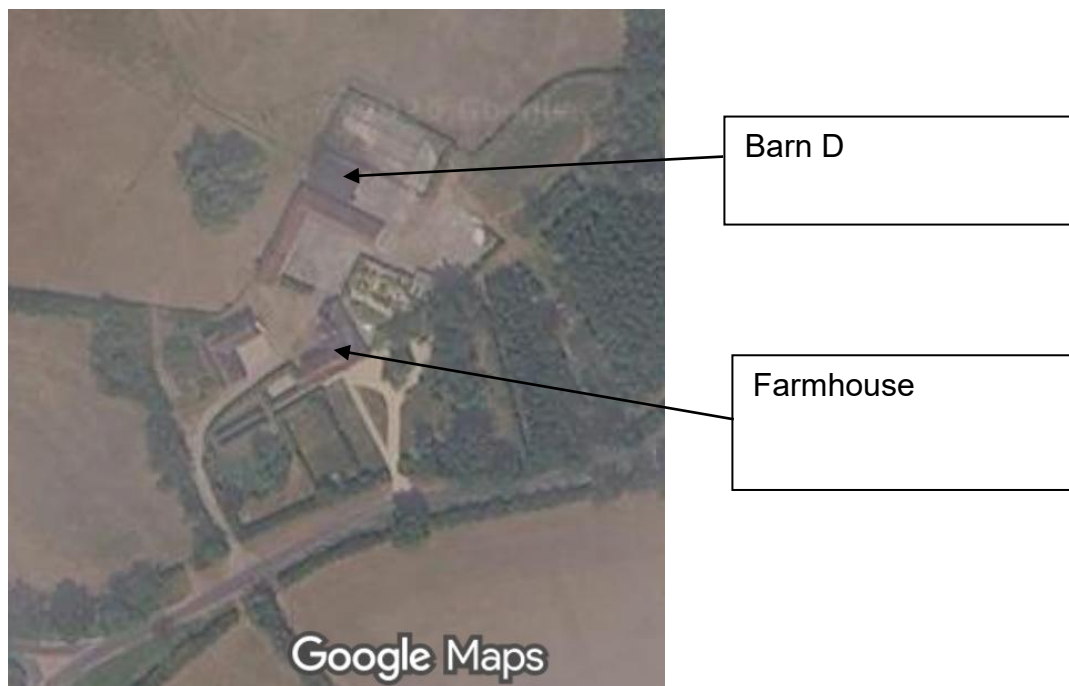


Pitts Farm is a grade II listed building. The list entry, a means to identify a building, reads as follows:

'Pitts Farmhouse II Farmhouse. C18, extended early C20. Dressed limestone, tiled roof with gable end brick stacks. L-plan. Two-storey, 4-window. Planked door to right of centre in latticed wooden porch, 3-light casement to left and 4-light casement to right. First floor has four 3-light casements. Left return is windowless; former steeper roofline visible. Rear has 3-light casements; rubble stone. Two-storey early C20 rear wing in brick with lean-to to right return. Interior has reused beam in entrance hall, some 6-panelled and planked doors. This farm part of the Duke of Westminster's Fonthill estate until the 1940s.'

Any building within its curtilage, that pre-dates July 1948 and was ancillary to the main house, could be covered by the listing ie 'curtilage listed'.

In terms of the site, the farmhouse is located to the south-west of the site. Intervening (ie between the farmhouse and the site) is an L-shaped range of barns which accords with historic mapping so potentially of interest. The existing modern barn is on the north-eastern side of the L shaped range.



Barn D is a modern barn and is therefore deemed not to be 'curtilage listed' or of interest. The 'heritage' issue is the potential impact on the barn on the setting of the listed farmhouse (if it is deemed to be within the farmhouse's setting).

I consider that the existing barn is within the setting of the farmhouse and I note that the agent, too, considers this to be the case (see following quote, underscored).

Proposal:

The current barn has consent for conversion to residential. In respect of a pre-application enquiry, proposing instead the construction of a new building (residential use) I said:

'The existing Dutch barn is an unattractive structure that causes some harm to the setting of the farmhouse and its curtilage listed barns. Its conversion to residential would result in an unattractive structure that would compound the harm to the setting of the adjacent barn. The proposed scheme is more reflective of the existing historic character of the farm buildings. The removal of the concrete hard standing would also be a visual improvement. As such, I consider the proposed scheme would represent an enhancement over the existing situation and Class Q conversion and as such, I am unlikely to object subject to appropriate conditions etc'.

Issues: impact on the setting of neighbouring listed buildings.

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 and Heritage Statement" which provides sufficient information to understand the impact of the proposals and is proportionate to their scope. The requirements of the NPPF are therefore met in this respect.

Decision-makers must be satisfied that assessments accurately reflect the effects on heritage assets caused by development proposals. In this case, although the application is accompanied by a *Design, Access and Heritage Statement*, the document provides limited information about the building and fails to include an objective assessment of the affected fabric, its date, significance, or the impact of the proposed works. Consequently, it does not meet the requirements of the NPPF. The following heritage recommendations are therefore made on the basis of the local planning authority's own assessment of the significance of the heritage asset and the impact of the proposals.

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 of a building 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, in so far as it relates to the current application, lies with.....

A historic farmhouse still in operation as a farmhouse (social, evidential interest);
Its rural setting and the fields that surround it;
Its appearance and floorplan;
Its association with a range of farm buildings and a farmyard.

Barn D is not of interest, being a standard 20th century farm building set outside the historic courtyard arrangement.

Assessment:

The existing barn (which has consent for conversion) causes some slight harm to the setting of the farmhouse in view of its non-traditional appearance and that the roof can be seen from the farmhouse (one assumes from the upper floors at least).

The proposals will introduce three linked smaller structures with traditional pitched roofs and utilising traditional materials, arranged in a L-plan.



Fig 19 View from south-east

The use of vernacular materials and the lower ridges (than the existing barn) and more traditional appearance, will not cause further harm to the setting of the farmhouse.

Summary & conclusion:

The NPPF confirms that when considering the potential impact of a development proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, substantial 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 will be a matter of considerable importance and weight which requires clear and convincing justification.

The impact of the proposals on the farmhouse will be modestly positive on the basis that the existing barn (to be replaced) causes some slight harm to the setting of the listed farmhouse.

As such, the proposals are considered to be in accordance with Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Building) Act 1990.

In terms of conditions, you might want to consider:

Materials schedule;

Materials schedule for any hard landscaping

Consideration of withdrawing permitted development rights?