

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

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Officer's Name: Mrwan Ali
Officer's Title: Planning Officer

Application No: PL/2026/03676
Single storey extensions to front and rear, partial recladding, window reconfiguration, loft conversion and terrace over existing garage
391c Ham Green, Holt, Trowbridge, BA14 6PZ

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.

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)

“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 application is for a single storey extension to front and rear, partial recladding, window reconfiguration, loft conversion and terrace over existing garage, which would substantially enlarge the building within its own plot.

Relevant planning history: NA

Issues: 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.

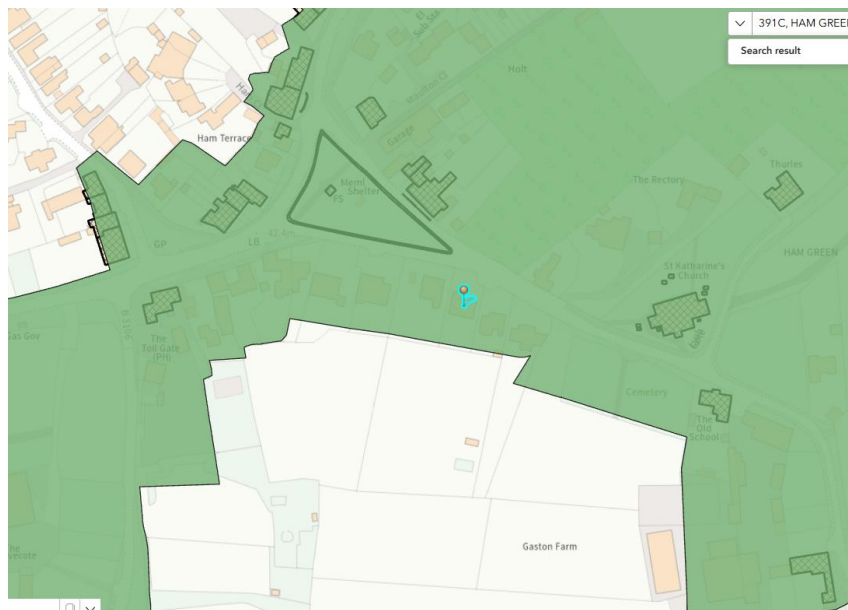
Decision-makers must be satisfied that assessments accurately reflect the effects on heritage assets caused by development proposals and in this case {the applications are accompanied by /needs to be accompanied by}

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 conservation area (designated Nov. 1974) is based around the village Green (Ham Green), which lies to the east of the proposed site, with the main part of the village lying to the south-western edge of the Green. Holt Court (owned by the National Trust) is noted within the Conservation

The application building, in isolation, makes a limited contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. However, as part of the wider group of buildings, it reflects the design ethos and architectural character of the 1960s. The relative uniformity of the gabled forms, together with the spacious plot arrangements, makes some positive contribution to the character of the conservation area.



Assessment: The proposed scheme looks to extend the building and alter the appearance of the property to create a large, 'contemporary' designed house, by enlarging windows and adding new materials to the limited material palette.

Reviewing the proposals as set out within the submitted Design, Access and Heritage Statement:

1. Front Entrance

A single-storey extension is proposed to create a new porch and entrance hall. The extension would incorporate a standing seam metal roof intended to create a 'greater visual focus' on the entrance. The proposed extension would bring the building line closer to the front boundary, resulting in a reduction of the existing front garden.

Whilst relatively modest in scale, the further erosion of the front garden space, together with the altered appearance of the building frontage, is considered to result in a small degree of harm to the character of the conservation area. Of greater concern is the introduction of standing seam metal roofing, which would add a new material to the otherwise limited and consistent material palette that characterises the conservation area. Whilst the Design, Access and Heritage Statement suggests that the extension would create a stronger connection with the public realm, it is unclear how this conclusion has been reached or evidenced.

2. Rear Extension

A single-storey rear extension is proposed. As this element would not be visible from the public realm or wider conservation area, it is not considered to have any appreciable impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area.

3. Loft Conversion

The proposal includes the insertion of two conservation-style rooflights on the front roof slope, positioned either side of the gable. Whilst the existing roof slope contributes to the character of the conservation area and rooflights inevitably introduce a degree of visual change, this element of the scheme is not considered to have a harmful impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area.

The proposed rooflights to the rear elevation would not be visible from the public realm and therefore would not contribute to, or detract from, the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Additional Considerations

The submitted assessment does not adequately consider the impact of the proposed alterations to the fenestration. These include the creation of a large feature window within the gable and the insertion of first-floor glazed doors to provide access to the proposed balcony.

Collectively, these alterations would significantly increase the proportion of glazing within the elevations, resulting in a more reflective and visually prominent appearance. This would contrast with the established character of the conservation area, which is characterised predominantly by traditional stone-built properties with more modestly proportioned openings and a greater balance of solid wall to glazing. The existing dwelling responds reasonably well to this prevailing characteristic, whereas the proposed alterations would introduce a more overtly contemporary architectural treatment that would sit less comfortably within its surroundings.

There are also concerns regarding the potential for increased light spill arising from the substantial areas of glazing. Given the rural character of the settlement and the limited presence of street lighting, increased illumination from the property, particularly during the evening and night-time hours, has the potential to increase its prominence and adversely affect the established character and appearance of the conservation area.

Contemporary design can make a positive contribution to the ongoing evolution of a settlement which has developed organically over time, and a contemporary approach is not objectionable in itself. However, for such development to be successful within a conservation area, its scale, form, detailing and material palette should respond positively to the established character and significance of its surroundings. In this instance, the proposed alterations appear to place greater emphasis on creating a visual contrast rather than drawing upon and reinforcing those characteristics which contribute positively to the conservation area.

The established building line also provides a degree of uniformity within this group of dwellings and contributes to the pattern of development along this side of the Green. While some encroachment has already occurred through the construction of the existing garage, the proposed front extension would result in further built development projecting forward of the principal elevation. This would erode the spaciousness of the front garden and the open setting of the dwelling, characteristics which contribute positively to the street scene and to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Overall, the proposed development would result in a marked change to the architectural character and appearance of the existing dwelling. While the building itself makes only a limited individual contribution to the significance of the conservation area, it forms part of a relatively cohesive group of dwellings whose consistent building line, gabled forms, spacious front gardens and restrained architectural treatment contribute positively to the character of this part of the conservation area.

The cumulative effect of the proposed alterations, particularly the substantial increase in glazing, the prominent feature window and balcony arrangement, together with the forward projection of the proposed extension, would erode these established characteristics. The increased proportion of glazing would also result in a more visually prominent and reflective elevation, with the potential for increased light spill to further emphasise the development within this relatively rural and poorly lit setting.

Although a contemporary architectural approach is not objectionable in principle, in this instance the scale, form and architectural treatment of the proposals do not respond sufficiently to the established character and significance of the conservation area. Rather than reinforcing the positive characteristics of the existing group, the development would introduce a more assertive and contrasting form of development and would further erode the spaciousness and consistency of the street scene.

The proposals would therefore fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and would result in harm to its significance. The scheme would benefit from further consideration of the extent of glazing, the architectural treatment of the principal elevations, and the scale and projection of the front extension, with a more contextual approach that responds positively to the established character of this part of the conservation area.

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 character of the conservation area, as identified above. The wording of the NPPF and the 'special regard' by Section 72 of the Act requires that any harm caused should be taken seriously.

Whilst the NPPF allows that 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.