

APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION

CASE OFFICER REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2026/04270
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	66 Market Place, Chippenham, SN15 3JA
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	External alterations to building including replacement cladding and insertion of new windows and access doors.
RECOMMENDATION:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The application site comprises 66 Market Place, Chippenham, a three-storey commercial building within the Chippenham town centre Conservation Area, with a number of Heritage assets to the rear off the Shambles and opposite the site off Market Place. The property occupies a central position within the Market Place being within the Primary Retail Frontage of the town. It was formerly occupied by Barclays Bank before the branch closed in June 2023. Wiltshire Police used the building as office accommodation until October 2025.

The building is currently in Class E use and is surrounded by a mixture of retail, commercial, leisure and residential uses. The site was recently subject to an application for prior approval under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for the change of use of an existing Commercial First and Second Floors to Residential Use (to provide 8 Units) (PL/2026/03833), which was granted.

The site is within a short walking distance to local retail and leisure services, public open space, public transport facilities and public car parks, with Chippenham bus station and railway station located within walking distance.

PROPOSAL

The proposal seek planning permission for the external alterations to the building following the granting of Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA for 8 residential units to the upper floors.

The proposed changes would see the exterior of the building upgraded.

- The materials above and below the windows on the Market Place elevation would be changed from opaque glazing to Catnic standing seam cladding in dark grey.
- Existing fenestration to be upgraded to Dark grey aluminium-framed fanlight casement windows
- On the north-west elevation at ground floor level, insertion of one new window to match the design and scale of the existing fenestration to be Dark grey aluminium-framed fanlight;

- On the north-east elevation at ground floor level, insertion of:
One new window
One new twin access door; and
One new pedestrian access door
to match the design and scale of the existing to be Dark grey aluminium-framed;

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
N/85/00782/F - Historic apps 1974 to 1983 Decision - Refuse Date: 10/6/1985 – Alteration to bank frontage.
N/87/02173/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 22/10/1987 – ERECTION OF SMALL SATELLITE ANTENNA
N/03/02134/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Refused Date: 30/9/2003 – ACCESS RAMP
N/05/02827/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 12/12/2005 – Alteration to Shopfront to Provide a New Accessible Entrance and Associated Alterations to the Footway
N/08/01302/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 16/7/2008 – Installation of New Shop Front Including New Entrance Door and Stone Wall
PL/2026/03833 - Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the General Permitted Development Order - Application for Prior Approval for the Change of Use of the Commercial First and Second Floors to Residential Use (to provide 8 Units), Prior Approval is GRANTED

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Statutory Legislation:

National Planning Policy:

- National Planning Policy NPPF (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- National Design Guide

Development Plan:

The development plan for Wiltshire comprises the *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)* (adopted January 2015) and any made neighbourhood plans, which remains the principal statutory planning document guiding development across the county. In line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Though the development plan is considered as a whole, those parts deemed to be particularly relevant to this application are listed below:

The adopted *Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS)*, with particular regard to:

- Core Policy 1 Settlement Strategy;
- Core Policy 2 Delivery Strategy;
- Core Policy 9 - Chippenham Central Areas of Opportunity
- Core Policy 10 Spatial Strategy Chippenham Community Area

- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping;
- Core Policy 58 Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment;

North Wiltshire Local Plan

Saved Policy R2 – Town Centre Primary Frontage Areas

Draft Wiltshire Local Plan

At Full Council on 19 May 2026, the elected members of Wiltshire Council agreed to withdraw the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan. The said Plan has no material weight for the purposes of the application.

In accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, on 30th June 2026 Wiltshire Council published a notice of intention to prepare a new local plan for Wiltshire. The next stage is a Scoping Consultation which commences on 2nd September 2026. This plan is at a very early stage and currently carries no weight for decision making.

Neighbourhood Plan:

Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan - made 2024 (CNP)

Policy TC4 – Development within Chippenham Conservation Area

Policy TC5 – Buildings of Local Merit

Supplementary Planning Documents and other Guidance:

- Wiltshire Design Guide (adopted April 2024)

ISSUES

The main issues that need to be addressed in this case include:

- Whether the development is acceptable in principle (CP 1 and 2)
- Whether the scheme constitutes high quality design (CP 57)
- Whether the scheme would have an acceptable impact upon the reasonable living conditions of the adjoining occupants (CP 57)
- Whether the scheme would preserve or enhance the historic environment (CP 58)

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The views of consultees are material considerations in the determination of the application. However, the decision-maker must exercise their own planning judgement. Where consultees raise concerns or recommend conditions, these have been considered and are addressed within the assessment section of this report.

WC Conservation: No Comment

Parish/Town Council: Objection on the following grounds:

While no objection is raised to the additional ground floor windows and doors, concerns are raised that the proposed smaller upper-floor windows and standing seam cladding surrounds would create a more austere appearance and fail to reflect the proportions of surrounding historic buildings. The Council also questions the suitability of standing

seam cladding in this context and requests further visual evidence. Consequently, it considers the proposal to conflict with Policy TC4 of the Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan, Core Policies 57 and 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and the objectives of the Conservation Area.

Regard has been had to Regulation 5A of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 (as amended), which requires notification to Historic England where the local planning authority considers that development would affect the setting of a Grade I or Grade II* listed building. Although the site is located within the wider setting of the Grade I listed Ye Old Hall and Council Chamber, the proposed alterations are confined to materials, fenestration and detailing on an existing modern building and would not affect the significance or setting of that asset. As no impact on the significance of the Grade I listed building has been identified, consultation with Historic England is not considered necessary or proportionate in this instance. The development is therefore considered to be a matter of local heritage interest and can be appropriately assessed by the Local Planning Authority having regard to its statutory duties under Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The consultee responses have been carefully considered. Whilst significant weight is afforded to specialist technical advice, the decision remains a matter for the Local Planning Authority, and the officer assessment below reaches an independent planning judgement on the issues raised.

REPRESENTATIONS

In accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), the application was publicised by way of:

- Neighbour notification letters sent to adjoining and nearby properties;
- A site notice displayed near the site;
- An advertisement placed in the local press

These methods were used to inform interested parties and provide a period of 21 days for comments to be submitted.

Below is a summary of the representations received during the consultation period. Only material planning considerations have been taken into account in the assessment of this application. Non-material issues, such as property values or private legal disputes, cannot be considered in the determination process.

No representations were received.

ASSESSMENT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

In accordance with this statutory requirement, this application has been assessed against the relevant policies of the Development Plan, including the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and, where applicable, any made Neighbourhood Plans. Consideration has also been given to the policies of the NPPF (NPPF) as a material consideration in the assessment.

The assessment below considers each of the main issues identified above. Each topic is assessed in turn with reference to the relevant policy context, the evidence submitted, consultee responses, and all other material considerations, before a conclusion is reached.

Principle of Development

Policy Context

Core Policies 1 and 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy establish the overarching spatial strategy for Wiltshire and provide the NPPF for determining whether development is appropriately located. Together, these policies seek to direct growth towards the most sustainable locations whilst protecting the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. The strategy prioritises development within Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and larger villages, whilst development in the countryside will only be supported where it accords with specific development plan policies or where material considerations indicate otherwise.

The NPPF also contains national policies relating to the location of development. Policies S3-S5 distinguish between development within settlements and development in the countryside, support sustainable patterns of growth, and require decisions to have regard to the role and function of settlements, accessibility to services and facilities, and other site-specific considerations.

The principle of development should be assessed having regard to the Development Plan as a whole, the NPPF and all other material considerations. The weight afforded to individual policies will depend upon the nature, scale and location of the development proposed.

Assessment

The principle of the proposed development must be assessed having regard to the Development Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework and all other material considerations.

The site occupies a prominent position within the town centre and Primary Retail Frontage and comprises an existing commercial building. A material consideration is that prior approval was granted under application PL/2026/03833 for the conversion of the first and second floors from commercial to residential use, providing eight dwellings. The principle of residential use has therefore already been established.

This application relates solely to external alterations to the existing building, intended to facilitate the approved redevelopment and enhance its appearance within the street scene. The works do not involve any extension of the building, additional floorspace, or changes to the approved mix of uses.

The proposal would support the refurbishment of a vacant and underutilised town centre building in a highly sustainable location within walking distance of shops, services, employment opportunities and public transport facilities. In this regard, the proposal is consistent with Policies S3 and S4 of the NPPF, which establish a presumption in favour of sustainable development within settlements and support the effective use of previously developed land and existing infrastructure.

Policies TC1 and TC2 of the NPPF also support the diversification and reuse of town centre buildings, including the provision of residential accommodation, where this would assist in maintaining the vitality and viability of town centres.

No conflict with the spatial strategy of the Development Plan has been identified. The proposal would make efficient use of an existing building within the town centre, support the ongoing regeneration of the area, and secure visual improvements to a building identified within the Conservation Area Appraisal as making a limited contribution to the townscape. Accordingly, the principle of development is supported

Design and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

Policy Context

Core Policy 57 of the WCS requires high-quality design that:

- Enhances local character.
- Responds to the natural, historic, and built environment.
- Retains important features (e.g., trees, hedges).
- Supports sustainable construction and compatibility with surrounding uses.
- Creates safe, legible, and accessible spaces.

Policies DP1 to DP4 of the NPPF promote development that is:

- Well-designed and visually attractive.
- Responsive to local character and context.
- Functional, accessible and sustainable.
- Supportive of healthy and inclusive communities.
- Resilient to climate change and environmental impacts.
- Conducive to the creation of high quality places and a positive built environment.

The Wiltshire Design Guide encourages sensitivity to local character, materials, and architectural styles and supports modern living standards while maintaining aesthetic and functional quality.

Building for a Healthy Life NPPF promotes healthy, inclusive, and sustainable places. The document encourages:

- Walkability.
- Access to green space.
- Active design principles for well-being.

Assessment

In assessing this aspect of the proposal, regard has been had to the site context, the details of the proposed development, the relevant development plan policies, and all other material considerations. The key considerations are set out below.

The application relates to a nondescript three-storey flat-roof infill building, erected as part of the town's post-war revival and estimated to have been built around 1960, occupying a central position within Market Place, Chippenham town centre. Although the building is within the Chippenham Conservation Area, it is not listed and has no architectural interest; the proposed works are limited to modest external alterations associated with refurbishing a vacant and underutilised town centre building.

The proposal would replace existing opaque glazed panels with dark grey standing seam cladding, upgrade the existing windows with like-for-like windows, and introduce a limited number of new openings within the side elevations. The proposed alterations would not materially alter the scale, massing, form, or overall appearance of the modern building, which has no historical aesthetic. Instead, the works would provide a more cohesive and contemporary appearance while respecting the established proportions, rhythm, and design of the existing elevations.

The proposed replacement windows and doors to the front elevation (southwest) would match the scale and design, with no change to the existing fenestration pattern, ensuring the alterations integrate satisfactorily with the host building and update that established continuity with modern aluminium frames. The proposed cladding would be positioned above and below the existing windows, replacing only the outdated pseudo-glazing;

The same frames and cladding placement would replace the windows on the side elevation (northwest) facing the narrow pedestrian alley used for bin storage. The proposed new window to this elevation would mimic the lower-floor windows on the rear elevation in scale and design, with modern aluminium frames and cladding matching the upper-floor windows, positioned at the bottom of the window.

The rear elevation faces The Shambles, a narrow alley running between the buildings fronting the Market Place Shopping area on Market Place Road. Opposite the rear of the building, separated by the Shambles, is Ye Old Hall and Council Chamber, a Grade 1 Listed Building operating as a museum. 56-57 Market Place, Grade II Listed, are at the northwest corner, again separated by The Shambles. The proposed alterations to the rear elevation would resemble that proposed to the front and side elevations. One ground floor window would be replaced with twin glass doors, mimicking the single door on the front elevation, with glazing above. A new single-glazed door with glazing above, matching the existing, would be installed on the ground floor below the existing fenestration, with a new window matching the window between the proposed doors.

The roof would be re-covered with cladding matching the position above and below the windows.

The cohesive materials and finishes across all proposed elevations reflect those approved for 1 Market Place, located at the start of the retail promenade of Market Place. The submitted details indicate they are the same design, material, and manufacturer.

Given the site's town centre location, surrounded by a mix of commercial, retail, leisure and residential uses of varying design, scale and material, the proposal would remain compatible

with the character and function of the surrounding area. The development would preserve the established building line and would not introduce any features that would appear incongruous or visually intrusive within the Market Place street scene or its back alleys.

Conclusion

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposal would result in a high quality design that responds positively to the character and appearance of the existing building and its town centre setting. The external alterations would enhance the visual appearance of the property without adversely affecting the character of the surrounding area and would therefore accord with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the design policies of the NPPF, and the guidance contained within the Wiltshire Design Guide.

Impact on Heritage Assets

Policy Context

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.

Section 66: Planning Permission 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. Section 72(1) of the Act requires the Council to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of designated Conservation Areas.

The NPPF heritage policies (HE1-HE10) require local planning authorities to identify and assess the significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal, including the contribution made by its setting. Decision-makers should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, securing their optimum viable use where consistent with their conservation, and ensuring that new development makes a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

When determining applications affecting heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight that should be afforded to its conservation. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset must be supported by clear and convincing justification.

Where a proposal would result in harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, that harm must be clearly identified and categorised. The level of harm should then be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal in accordance with the relevant heritage policies of the NPPF.

The Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on interpreting the NPPF.

The Council's Core Strategy Policy CP58 'Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment' requires that designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner appropriate to their significance and encourages proposals which improve the condition of heritage assets at risk.

The Council's Core Strategy CP 57: Ensuring high-quality design requires a high quality of design in all new developments. The policy requires applicants to "demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire through (amongst other things) responding to the value of the natural and historic environment and being sympathetic to and conserving historic buildings and landscapes. The development must respond positively to the existing context 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.

Assessment

In assessing this aspect of the proposal, regard has been had to the site context, the details of the proposed development, the relevant development plan policies, and all other material considerations. The key considerations are set out below.

The application site comprises a non-descript three-storey flat-roof infill building within the heart of the Chippenham Conservation Area. The building is not listed; however, because of its location within the conservation area and its proximity to a number of listed buildings surrounding Market Place and The Shambles, the proposal could affect the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of nearby designated heritage assets.

The application was not supported by a Heritage Statement or other heritage assessment proportionate to the significance of the heritage assets affected. Policy HE5 of the NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by development, including any contribution made by their setting, at a level of detail proportionate to the assets' importance and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal. The policy also requires an assessment of the likely effects of the development upon that significance. As only limited heritage information accompanied the submission, the Local Planning Authority has undertaken its own assessment having regard to the statutory duties under Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the evidence submitted, site observations, and the published Conservation Area Appraisal.

The proposal comprises the replacement of existing opaque glazed panels with dark grey standing seam cladding, replacement windows and doors, a limited number of new openings, and re-cladding of the roof. The alterations would not alter the scale, massing, form, or overall proportions of the building, which is of modern construction and does not itself make a positive contribution to the significance of nearby heritage assets.

The front elevation would retain its existing fenestration pattern, with replacement windows and doors matching the scale and proportions of the existing openings. Similar alterations are proposed to the side and rear elevations, with a small number of additional openings integrated into the existing design through matching materials and detailing. The proposed cladding would replace existing pseudo-glazing, resulting in a more coherent and contemporary appearance.

Chippenham Town Council has raised concerns regarding the proposed window proportions and the use of standing seam cladding, noting that the existing reflective surrounds create the perception of larger openings and that the proposed alterations could result in a more austere appearance. These comments are acknowledged. However, the building is identified within

the Chippenham Conservation Area Character Appraisal as a building of poor townscape merit and is of modern construction. The proposed window openings are marginally reduced in size; however, the reflective visual is pseudo-windows being of low quality and aged. The established fenestration pattern, proportions and rhythm of the elevations would be retained. Furthermore, the standing seam cladding would replace existing pseudo-glazing with a higher-quality and more durable material, resulting in a more cohesive and contemporary appearance. The proposal is considered to represent an overall improvement to the building's appearance and, when viewed in the context of the wider street scene and recent refurbishment works at 1 Market Place, would not appear incongruous or harmful to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Accordingly, the concerns raised are not considered sufficient to warrant refusal of the application.

While the rear elevation faces The Shambles and is visible within the setting of Ye Old Hall and Council Chamber and the buildings at 56-57 Market Place, the proposed works are limited to alterations in materials and detailing and would not affect the established scale, form or relationship of the building with these heritage assets. Views of the building from The Shambles are experienced primarily in passing and against a backdrop of modern servicing features, including bins, plant, satellite equipment and other ancillary infrastructure associated with surrounding buildings. In this context, the proposed replacement cladding, glazing and doors would not detract from the significance of nearby heritage assets and are considered to provide a modest improvement to the appearance of the building.

The introduction of additional glazing and access points associated with the approved residential use would increase activity and natural surveillance along The Shambles, contributing positively to the character and perceived safety of the area. Furthermore, the occupation and reuse of the upper floors would assist in maintaining activity within this part of the town centre and support the ongoing use of the building.

In addition to Ye Old Hall and Council Chamber, a number of listed buildings front onto Market Place, deriving significance from their historic fabric, architectural interest and relationship with the historic townscape. The application building is a modern infill structure of limited architectural merit which makes little positive contribution to that significance. The proposed palette of materials and finishes, including standing seam cladding and aluminium-framed glazing, would provide a more coherent and contemporary appearance and is consistent with the approach approved as part of the refurbishment of 1 Market Place. Whilst the Town Council has expressed concerns regarding the proposed fenestration and use of standing seam cladding, it is noted that the building is identified within the Conservation Area Character Appraisal as a building of poor townscape merit. The proposal would not alter the scale, massing or form of the building and is considered to enhance its appearance through the introduction of higher-quality and more durable materials. Whilst the Conservation Officer has elected not to comment, it is considered that the proposal represents an opportunity to improve the appearance of a prominent town centre building without affecting the significance, setting or appreciation of nearby heritage assets.

Having assessed the significance of the Chippenham Conservation Area and nearby designated heritage assets, including Ye Old Hall and Council Chamber (Grade I) and 56-57 Market Place (Grade II), it is considered that the proposal would not adversely affect those elements which contribute to their significance. The development would retain the existing

scale, massing, form and spatial relationships of the building, with changes limited to materials, fenestration and detailing. Consequently, the proposal falls within the category described by Policy HE5(2b) of the NPPF, in that it would have no effect on the significance of designated heritage assets.

In accordance with the heritage policies of the NPPF, any harm to the significance of a heritage asset must be clearly identified and assessed. Having regard to the scale and nature of the proposed alterations, the significance of nearby listed buildings and the character and appearance of the Chippenham Conservation Area, it is concluded that the proposal would preserve the setting of nearby designated heritage assets and preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. No harm to the significance of any designated heritage asset has been identified.

Notwithstanding the absence of heritage harm, the proposal would deliver public benefits through the enhancement of a prominent town centre building, improved energy efficiency arising from replacement windows and insulated cladding, a reduction in heat loss and operational carbon emissions, and investment in the ongoing viable use of a mid-20th century building. The proposal would also support the approved residential redevelopment of the upper floors and increase activity and natural surveillance within The Shambles. These benefits weigh positively in favour of the proposal.

Conclusion

Having regard to the statutory duties under Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the significance of the Chippenham Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings has been assessed. The proposal would retain the established form, scale and appearance of the building, with alterations limited to materials, fenestration and detailing that would result in a high-quality enhancement to the existing building. Having regard to the significance of the Chippenham Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings, the proposal is assessed as having no effect on the significance of those designated heritage assets and therefore falls within the category described by Policy HE5(2b) of the NPPF. The proposal preserves the setting of nearby listed buildings and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and is accordingly considered to comply with Policies CP57 and CP58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the heritage objectives of the NPPF.

Amenity

Policy Context

Core Policy 57 (Point vii) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires development to respect the amenity of existing occupants and ensure appropriate amenity levels for future residents.

Policy P3 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires development to be appropriate for its location, taking account of its likely effects on health, living conditions and the environment. In particular, Policy P3(2)(b) requires development to avoid giving rise to unacceptable impacts on the living conditions of neighbouring residents and occupiers. In assessing amenity impacts, regard should be had to matters including daylight and sunlight, outlook, privacy, overbearing impacts and other effects on residential amenity.

The proposed development is limited to external alterations to an existing commercial building and does not involve any extension, increase in floorspace, or changes to the building's overall scale or massing. As such, the proposal would not give rise to any material impacts in terms of overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light, overbearing effects, or outlook to neighbouring occupiers.

The alterations are confined to replacement cladding, upgraded fenestration and the insertion of a limited number of openings within elevations facing the public realm. Given the town centre location and the nature of the works proposed, it is considered that the development would preserve the amenity of adjacent occupiers and would provide an acceptable living environment for future residents. Accordingly, the proposal accords with Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Policy P3 of the NPPF.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Policy Context

Core Policy 50 of the WCS Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. Policy N2 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that development contributes positively to the natural environment and supports nature's recovery. Development proposals should conserve and enhance biodiversity, minimise adverse impacts on habitats and species, strengthen ecological networks where appropriate, and identify opportunities for biodiversity enhancement.

Proposals must assess and address potential effects on:

- Protected species;
- Priority habitats;
- Ecological networks; and
- Green and blue infrastructure.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is an approach to development seeking to ensure that habitats for wildlife are left in a measurably better state than they were before the development. As of 12 February 2024 (2 April 2024 for smaller sites) BNG is mandatory in England under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). This means developers must deliver a BNG of 10% to ensure development will result in more or better quality natural habitat than there was before development.

The Wiltshire Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy (2022–2030) encourages habitat connectivity, nature based solutions, and integration of biodiversity within site design; these principles guide the assessment of detailed proposals.

Assessment

The proposed development relates solely to external alterations to an existing building within a fully developed town centre location. The works comprise replacement cladding, upgraded windows and the insertion of a limited number of door and window openings. No expansion of the building footprint, loss of habitat, removal of vegetation, or works to areas of ecological value are proposed.

Conclusion

Having regard to the nature of the proposals and the absence of any habitat impacts, the development is considered acceptable in ecological and biodiversity terms and complies with Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Policy N2 of the NPPF.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development is considered acceptable in planning terms. The scheme would facilitate the refurbishment and enhancement of a prominent building within the town centre through improved external materials, upgraded fenestration and the provision of a more cohesive and visually attractive appearance. The proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the Chippenham Conservation Area, preserve the setting of nearby listed buildings, and would not result in any unacceptable impacts on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

Having regard to the Development Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework and all other material considerations, the proposal is considered to accord with the Development Plan as a whole. It complies with the design, heritage and amenity objectives of Core Policies 57 and 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the relevant policies of the NPPF. Accordingly, planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Planning Permission be GRANTED, subject to conditions

All conditions imposed have been assessed against the tests set out in Policy DM6 of the NPPF and are considered to be necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

Existing Site Plan, Proposed Site Plan, Site Location Plan AA/25/30/01 Received 8 Jul 2026

Existing Elevations and Proposed Elevations AA/25/30/21 Received 8 Jul 2026

Existing Ground Floor Plan and Proposed Ground Floor Plan AA/25/30/20 Received 8 Jul 2026

Application Form Received 8 Jul 2026

Proposed Window Scale and cross-sections MP66 Developments Alunet Received 23 Sept 2026

Proposed Roof and Wall Cladding CAT260-Catnic-Urban-Specification-GuideDigital_Wall Cladding Received 23 Sept 2026

Proposed Window Technical Product Sheet ALUNA Window Received 23 Sept 2026

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. All new windows and doors to be installed, and those being replaced, shall be Dark grey aluminium-framed fanlight casement range from the Proposed Window Technical Product Sheet ALUNA Window Received 23 Sept 2026 and as per Proposed Window Scale and cross-sections MP66 Developments Alunet Received 23 Sept 2026, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In the interests of preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area

4. All cladding and Roofing shall be from the Proposed Roof and Wall Cladding CAT260-Catnic-Urban-Specification-Guide-Digital_Wall Cladding, received 23 Sept 2026, finished in dark grey unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In the interests of preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area

5. No construction or demolition work shall take place on Sundays or Public Holidays or outside the hours of 0800 to 1800 Monday to Friday and 0800 to 1300 on Saturdays.

REASON: To ensure that the development hereby permitted is not detrimental to the amenity of the surrounding area by reason of undue noise emission during construction.

Informative

Any alterations to the approved plans, brought about by compliance with Building Regulations or any other reason must first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before commencement of work.

Informative

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan, if one is required in respect of this permission would be Wiltshire Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. For further information on exempt developments please refer to:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because one or more of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements is considered to apply.