

## AGENDA

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**Meeting:** Eastern Area Planning Committee

**Place:** Wessex Room - The Corn Exchange, Market Place, Devizes, SN10 1HS

**Date:** Thursday 3 April 2014

**Time:** 6.00 pm

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Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Jessica Croman, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718262 or email [jessica.croman@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:jessica.croman@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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### Membership:

Cllr Mark Connolly (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr Stewart Dobson  
Cllr Peter Evans  
Cllr Nick Fogg MBE

Cllr Richard Gamble  
Cllr Charles Howard (Chairman)  
Cllr Jerry Kunkler  
Cllr Paul Oatway

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### Substitutes:

Cllr Liz Bryant  
Cllr Terry Chivers  
Cllr Ernie Clark  
Cllr Dennis Drewett

Cllr Jeff Osborn  
Cllr James Sheppard  
Cllr Philip Whitehead  
Cllr Christopher Williams

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# AGENDA

## Part I

Items to be considered when the meeting is open to the public

1 **Apologies for Absence**

2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (*Pages 1 - 10*)

To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2014 (copy herewith).

3 **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of disclosable interests or dispensations granted by the Standards Committee.

4 **Chairman's Announcements**

To note any announcements from the Chairman.

5 **Public Participation and Councillors' Questions**

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public.

### Statements

Members of the public who wish to speak either in favour or against an application or any other item on this agenda are asked to register in person no later than 5.50pm on the day of the meeting.

The Chairman will allow up to 3 speakers in favour and up to 3 speakers against an application and up to 3 speakers on any other item on this agenda. Each speaker will be given up to 3 minutes and invited to speak immediately prior to the item being considered. The rules on public participation in respect of planning applications are detailed in the Council's Planning Code of Good Practice.

### Questions

To receive any questions from members of the public or members of the Council received in accordance with the constitution which excludes, in particular, questions on non-determined planning applications. Those wishing to ask questions are required to give notice of any such questions in writing to the officer named on the front of this agenda no later than **5pm on Thursday 27**

**March 2014.** Please contact the officer named on the front of this agenda for further advice. Questions may be asked without notice if the Chairman decides that the matter is urgent.

Details of any questions received will be circulated to Committee members prior to the meeting and made available at the meeting and on the Council's website.

**6 Alton Village Design Statement (Pages 11 - 48)**

To agree the Alton Village Design Statement as planning policy to be used in future meetings of the Eastern Area Planning Committee.

**7 Rights of Way Items**

To receive details of the following Rights of Way report:

Wiltshire Council parish of Baydon path 2 (part) and path 11 (part) diversion order and definitive map modification order 2013.

(See Agenda Supplement 1).

**8 Planning Applications**

To consider and determine the following planning applications.

8a **13/03736/FUL - Fernbank, Chimney Lane, Honeystreet, Pewsey, Wiltshire, Sn9 5PS (Pages 49 - 68)**

8b **13/07057/FUL - Homesteads Rivar Road Shalbourne Marlborough SN8 3QE (Pages 69 - 80)**

8c **13/07058/LBC - Homesteads Rivar Road Shalbourne Marlborough SN8 3QE (Pages 81 - 84)**

**9 Urgent items**

Any other items of business which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be taken as a matter of urgency

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## **EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE**

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### **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 FEBRUARY 2014 IN THE WESSEX ROOM - THE CORN EXCHANGE, MARKET PLACE, DEVIZES, SN10 1HS.**

#### **Present:**

Cllr Mark Connolly (Vice-Chair), Cllr Stewart Dobson, Cllr Peter Evans, Cllr Nick Fogg MBE, Cllr Richard Gamble, Cllr Charles Howard (Chairman), Cllr Jerry Kunkler and Cllr Paul Oatway

#### **Also Present:**

Cllr Stuart Wheeler

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#### **1. Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies received.

#### **2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held 5 December 2013 were presented. It was;

#### **Resolved:**

**To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held 5 December 2013, as a true and accurate record.**

#### **3. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **4. Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman outlined the procedures for the meeting. There were no further announcements

**5. Public Participation and Councillors' Questions**

The Chairman outlined the procedure for public participation. No questions had been submitted from the public or Councillors.

**6. Rights of Way Items**

**7. The Wiltshire Council Collingbourne Kingston 1B (part) & 33 and Chute 3 (part) Rights of Way Modification Order 2013**

Public Participation

No members of the public registered to speak on this application.

Sally Madgwick, Rights of Way Officer (RWO), outlined the officer's report which recommended the Modification Order be forwarded to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for determination with the recommendation that the Order be confirmed as made.

The RWO outlined the description of the existing route and the proposed changes, focusing in particular on the classification of the route as a restricted by-way. The RWO stated that the application must be considered by the inspectorate even if there is only a single anonymous objection. The RWO proceeded to outline the evidence in support and objection to the order, and detailed the implications of the order with regard to economic and environmental impact.

Members were presented with an opportunity to ask technical question for the application and these focused on the use of the lane as a restricted by-way and limitations on motor traffic users. Questions on access for other land owners were asked and clarification sought on the nature and relevance of the objections received.

Members of the public were given the opportunity to address the Committee as detailed above.

Cllr Howard spoke as the local member for the application and spoke in support of the Officers recommendation.

The Committee then entered debate on the order, and raised the possibility of the land owner installing bollards to limit the usage of the restricted by-way. It was confirmed that this would not be lawful given the current legislation, but that proposals to change the law may allow for the installation of a cattle gate. The Committee decided against amending the recommendation with any conditions and, at the end of the debate, the Committee:

**Resolved:**

**To forward the Wiltshire Council Collingbourne Kingston 1B (part) & 33 and Chute 3 (part) Rights of Way Modification Order to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for determination, with the recommendation that the Order be confirmed as made.**

**To place on record the commendation of the Rights of Way Team for their work in producing such a substantial report.**

**8. Planning Applications**

**9. 13/06529/OUT - Land East of High Street Burbage Wilts**

Public Participation

Mr Glen Godwin spoke in support of the application.

Mr Steve Colling Burbage Parish Council, spoke in support of the application.

Local member Cllr Stuart Wheeler spoke in support of the application.

The Area Development Manager outlined the report which recommended the application be granted planning permission. The Area Development Manager outlined the late item that had been received which detailed late representations received from the applicant. The Area Development Manager outlined the details of the site, noting that the site comprised of an L-shaped parcel of land approximately 2.5h in size with the High Street located on its western side, and that part of the proposed development was situated outside of the Burbage specified limits of development. The Area Development Manager also outlined existing access routes across the site including a footpath running north to south.

The key planning policy considerations were noted as being: Kennet Local Plan 2011: HC26 Housing in the countryside and HC34: Recreation provision on large developments. Policy NR7 states that where developments are outside the Limits of Development, the council will seek to protect and enhance the character and quality of the environment. The Committee also gave weight to the emerging Core Strategy although this was not formally considered in the decision as the document is yet to be formally adopted by the council.

The Area Development Manager outlined the consultations that had been undertaken, and noted that no objections had been received. As a result of discussions with consultees and the Parish Council, the applicant had agreed to reduce the number of dwellings on the site.

The Committee were then invited to ask technical questions of the application. Particular focus was afforded to the impact of the development on the highstreet

and the impact of increased traffic flow as a result of the proposed development.

Members of the public (above) were then invited to speak on the application.

Local Member Cllr Stuart Wheeler spoke in support of the application stating that the area has been unkempt for a long time and that it was the most suitable place for additional housing to be built within the village. Cllr Wheeler stated the importance of affordable homes with good access, and it was clarified that 40% of the dwellings would be classified affordable housing, and would not negatively impact on the high street. Cllr Wheeler noted the importance of a section 106 agreement in providing the necessary contributions that would be required as a result of any development to the site.

Members then entered into debate on the application, and the main concerns were summarised as being: the traffic increase and developer contributions to the local school under a s106 agreement to enable the village to accommodate the increase in numbers.

**Resolved:**

**To GRANT planning permission for the application subject to the completion of a Section 106 and/or other legal agreement to secure:**

- 1) 40% affordable housing;**
- 2) Educational Contributions;**
- 3) Open space contributions;**
- 4) Transfer of land and associated maintenance payment around Seymour Pond to Parish Council.**

**And subject to the following conditions:**

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun either before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission, or before the expiration of two years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved, whichever is the later.**

**REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.**

- 2 No development shall commence on site until details of the following matters (in respect of which approval is expressly reserved) have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority:**



- (a) The scale of the development;
- (b) The layout of the development;
- (c) The external appearance of the development;
- (d) The landscaping of the site;

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

**REASON:** The application was made for outline planning permission and is granted to comply with the provisions of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Article 3(1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.

- 3** An application for the approval of all of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

**REASON:** To comply with the provisions of Section 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 4** **INFORMATIVE TO APPLICANT:**  
This permission shall be read in conjunction with an Agreement made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 and dated the [INSERT].

- 5** All soft landscaping comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the first occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner; All shrubs, trees and hedge planting shall be maintained free from weeds and shall be protected from damage by vermin and stock. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years, die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. All hard landscaping shall also be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

**REASON:** To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and the protection of existing important landscape features.

- 6** No development shall commence on site until details of the estate roads, footways, footpaths, verges, junctions, street lighting, sewers, drains, retaining walls, service routes, surface water outfall, vehicle overhang margins, visibility splays, accesses, carriageway gradients,

drive gradients, car parking and street furniture, including the timetable for provision of such works, have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be first occupied until the estate roads, footways, footpaths, verges, junctions, street lighting, sewers, drains, retaining walls, service routes, surface water outfall, vehicle overhang margins, visibility splays, accesses, carriageway gradients, drive gradients, car parking and street furniture have all been constructed and laid out in accordance with the approved details, unless an alternative timetable is agreed in the approved details.

**REASON:** To ensure that the roads are laid out and constructed in a satisfactory manner.

- 7 No part of the development shall be first brought into use until the visibility splays shown on the approved plans have been provided with no obstruction to visibility at or above a height of 500mm above the nearside carriageway level. The visibility splays shall be maintained free of obstruction at all times thereafter.

**REASON:** In the interests of highway safety

- 8 No dwelling on the development hereby approved shall be occupied until sufficient space for the parking of vehicles, in accordance with current standards, together with a vehicular access thereto, has been provided in accordance with details submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The said spaces shall not be used other than for the parking of vehicles or for the purpose of access.

**REASON:** To ensure that adequate provision is made for parking within the site in the interests of highway safety.

- 9 No development shall commence on site until an investigation of the history and current condition of the site to determine the likelihood of the existence of contamination arising from previous uses has been carried out and all of the following steps have been complied with to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority:

Step (i) A written report has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority which shall include details of the previous uses of the site for at least the last 100 years and a description of the current condition of the site with regard to any activities that may have caused contamination. The report shall confirm whether or not it is likely that contamination may be present on the site.

Step (ii) If the above report indicates that contamination may be present on or under the site, or if evidence of contamination is found,

a more detailed site investigation and risk assessment has been carried out in accordance with DEFRA and Environment Agency's "Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination CLR11" and other authoritative guidance and a report detailing the site investigation and risk assessment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Step (iii) If the report submitted pursuant to step (i) or (ii) indicates that remedial works are required, full details have been submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing and thereafter implemented prior to the commencement of the development or in accordance with a timetable that has been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority as part of the approved remediation scheme. On completion of any required remedial works the applicant shall provide written confirmation to the Local Planning Authority that the works have been completed in accordance with the agreed remediation strategy.

**REASON:** To ensure that land contamination can be dealt with adequately prior to the use of the site hereby approved by the Local Planning Authority.

- 10 No development shall commence until a foul water drainage strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed.

**REASON:** To ensure that proper provision is made for sewerage of the site and that the development does not increase the risk of sewer flooding to downstream property.

- 11 No development shall commence until a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydrogeological context of the development, in accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment (PFA Consulting, Ref: P576, dated 22/08/2013), has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed. The scheme shall also include details of how the scheme shall be maintained and managed after completion.

**REASON:** To prevent the increased risk of flooding and ensure future maintenance of the surface water drainage system.

- 12 No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until a Construction Environmental Management Plan, incorporating

**pollution prevention measures, has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details and agreed timetable.**

**REASON: To prevent pollution of the water environment.**

- 13 No development approved by this permission shall commence until a scheme for water efficiency has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the agreed details.**

**REASON: In the interests of sustainable development and prudent use of natural resources.**

- 14 INFORMATIVE TO APPLICANT:  
An appropriate submitted scheme to discharge the above condition will include a water usage calculator showing how the development will aim not to exceed a usage level of 105 litres per person per day.**

- 15 INFORMATIVE TO APPLICANT:  
There should be no interruption to the surface water drainage system of the surrounding land as a result of the operations on the site. Provisions should be made to ensure that all existing drainage systems continue to operate effectively.**

- 16 INFORMATIVE TO APPLICANT:  
Safeguards should be implemented during the construction phase to minimise the risks of pollution from the development. Such safeguards should cover:  
- the use of plant and machinery  
- oils/chemicals and materials  
- the use and routing of heavy plant and vehicles  
- the location and form of work and storage areas and compounds  
- the control and removal of spoil and wastes.  
The applicant should refer to the Environment Agency's Pollution Prevention Guidelines at:  
<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/pollution/39083.aspx>.**

- 17 INFORMATIVE TO APPLICANT: The reserved matters application should be accompanied by updated ecological survey reports, a site drawing showing ecological enhancement features and an ecological management plan.**

- 18 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: P.0796\_04, P.0796\_07C and P576/2A**

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

**9.a 13/05630/FUL - Fiddlers Cottage, Urchfont, SN10 4RG (THIS APPLICATION HAS NOW BEEN WITHDRAWN)**

This application was withdrawn by the applicant.

**10. 13/05650/LBC - Fiddlers Cottage Urchfont SN10 4RG (THIS APPLICATION HAS NOW BEEN WITHDRAWN)**

This application was withdrawn by the applicant.

**11. Planning Enforcement Update - Untidy site at Rum Jungle, Snails Lane, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 1DB**

The Area Development Manager outlined the Planning Enforcement report which provided a summary of enforcement action taken on Rum Jungle, Snails Lane, Devizes. Members commented on the good work of the Enforcement Team, and it was noted that a local land charge has been put on the land in order to recover the costs incurred when the site is sold in future.

**Resolved:**

**To note the report from the Planning Enforcement Team.**

**12. Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 6.00 - 6.45 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Samuel Bath, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718211, e-mail [samuel.bath@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:samuel.bath@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114/713115

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**WILTSHIRE COUNCIL**

**EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**3 APRIL 2014**

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**THE ALTONS**  
**VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To consider the contents of, and approve as a material consideration, the Village Design Statement (VDS) for The Altons.

A copy of this VDS is attached at **Appendix 1**.

**Relevance to the Council's Business Plan**

2. Approval of the VDS will contribute towards the outcome for everyone in Wiltshire to live in a high quality environment.

**Background**

3. In 1996 the Countryside Commission (now Natural England) launched the 'Design in the Countryside' initiative, and produced advisory packs to help villages understand the concept, process and method of producing a VDS.
4. VDSs are prepared by local communities. They offer a framework for engaging local people in constructive debate about defining the special character of their village, as a basis for ensuring that new development in their area fits its surroundings and is in keeping with that character. The VDS can help everyone involved in a development to understand local views and perceptions at the outset of the design process.
5. This helps new buildings to be designed in a way that is more likely to gain local support, rather than generate opposition. VDSs provide a tool to help manage long-term change, not prevent it.
6. A VDS contains a descriptive analysis of the relationship between landscape, settlement patterns and buildings. From the survey analysis, the VDS identifies principles to be applied to new developments such as the design of buildings and the spaces between them. The document should benefit local people, developers, new occupants and planners.
7. The Localism Act has provided a renewed impetus to community-led planning and documents such as VDSs play an important part in helping to deliver the Government's Localism agenda.

8. This paper considers and assesses the VDS for The Altons which fall within east Wiltshire. The statutory development plan for east Wiltshire is the Kennet Local Plan 2011. This includes saved Local Plan policies and provides the policy context for considering development within the villages in east Wiltshire. This plan will be superseded by the Wiltshire Core Strategy once it is adopted, expected sometime in 2014.

### **Village Design Statement Protocol**

9. The Council's approach towards endorsing VDSs is to approve them as material considerations in the determination of planning applications. The rationale for this is set out in the Council's Village Design Statement Protocol, attached at **Appendix 2**.
10. The Protocol sets out the validation checklist that is used to appraise each VDS to ensure it is fit for purpose and appropriate for the Council to approve as a material consideration. This checklist is based on the Countryside Commission's (now Natural England) advisory guidance referred to above and is set out in brief below:

Does the VDS:

- describe the distinctive character of the village and the surrounding countryside;
- show how character can be identified at three levels:
  - the landscape setting of the village,
  - the shape of the settlement,
  - the nature of the buildings themselves;
- draw up design principles based on the distinctive local character.

Has the process of developing the Village Design Guidance met the following objectives:

- worked in partnership with the local planning authority in the context of existing local planning policy and to influence future policies;
- been developed, researched, written and edited by local people? Is it representative of the views of the village as a whole? Has the process involved a wide section of the village community in its production?

### **Summary of Appraisal**

11. The VDS has been appraised against each of these objectives and the results of this assessment are presented in the template at **Appendix 3**.
12. To summarise, this VDS provides a comprehensive description of The Altons and their environs. Throughout the VDS, a detailed description of the local character is provided and design principles are provided throughout the document based on this character.

### **Safeguarding Considerations**

13. There are no known implications at this time.



### **Public Health Implications**

14. There are no public health implications.

### **Environmental Impact of the Recommendation**

15. The VDS provides design guidance to help inform the determination of planning applications in The Altons.

### **Risk Assessment**

16. There are no key risks identified in relation to the decision being considered.

### **Financial Implications**

17. There are no financial implications to the Council at this time.

### **Options Considered**

18. Approval of the VDS by committee gives the document weight in decision making. It will complement existing planning policy and guidance, strengthening the Council's position when advising or negotiating on design and allows local views to be taken into consideration early in the process.

### **Legal Implications**

19. Once a VDS has been approved by Committee, full regard must be had to its content in decision making.

### **Conclusion**

20. It is considered that The Altons VDS complies with the Council's protocol and should be approved as a material consideration to inform decisions on planning applications.

### **Recommendation**

21. It is recommended that the VDS for The Altons be approved as a material consideration for the purposes of development management.

### **ALISTAIR CUNNINGHAM**

Associate Director, Economic Development and Planning

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Report Author:

**Judith Cameron**

Senior Planning Officer

Economic Development and Planning

**The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:**

None

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1: The Altons Village Design Statement

Appendix 2: Village Design Statement Protocol

Appendix 3: Village Design Statement Validation Checklist – The Altons

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# The Altons



## Village Design Statement

## Contents:

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10. Appendix: Listed buildings in the Altons	Page 23

## Introduction

In 2006 the Parish Council encouraged members of the community to consider the production of a Village Design Statement. In 2007 a group of volunteers independent from the Parish Council produced a questionnaire to ascertain the views of the local residents about the future of the Altons. Every property was provided with a questionnaire to complete. Replies were collected and analysed. Members of the community with specific expertise or interests were asked to contribute key sections. The initial draft of the VDS was passed to the Parish Council for comment. The former Kennet District Council was contacted at various stages in the production of the document and their help and advice was appreciated.

**Alton Barnes and Priors are protected by important designations and care must be taken to ensure that new development is compatible with the special character of the area.**

The villages lie within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NWD AONB). The NWD AONB Management Plan contains objectives and policies for conserving and enhancing the area in a sustainable way and endorses the production of Village Design Statements. The Management Plan is supported by the Local Planning Authority and is a material consideration in planning applications in the AONB.

**We hope our recommendations, which reflect full consultation with all the residents, will be taken fully into account in decision-making by the relevant authorities, in particular Wiltshire Council; New College, Oxford, historic owners of much of the land; and the Canal and River Trust (formerly British Waterways) in relation to the Kennet and Avon Canal.**

## The setting

The villages of Alton Barnes and Alton Priors, the Altons, are located near the intersection of the east-west Pewsey to Devizes road and the route north to the A4 and south to the A342 and A345. Together with the very small village of Honeystreet (which produced its own VDS in 2006) they make up the residential areas of the Alton Parish. Apart from a few small nearby villages the Altons are relatively remote. The market towns of Devizes and Pewsey are about 8 miles to the west by road and 5 miles to the east respectively. Marlborough is 9 miles away to the northeast. For additional retail facilities significant distances have to be incurred. These include

Salisbury to the south (60 mile round trip) Swindon to the north (43 mile round trip) and Bath to the west (62 mile round trip).

The Altons are set amidst highly productive arable farmlands which dominate the immediate surroundings. This provides for many unobstructed views to the chalk escarpment of the Pewsey Downs to the north including that to the Alton White Horse.



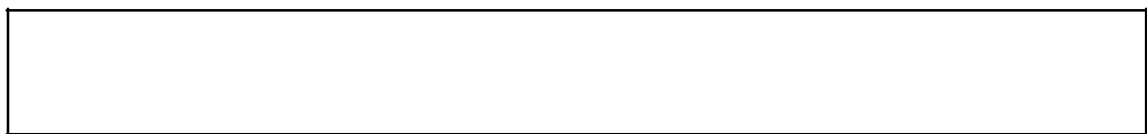
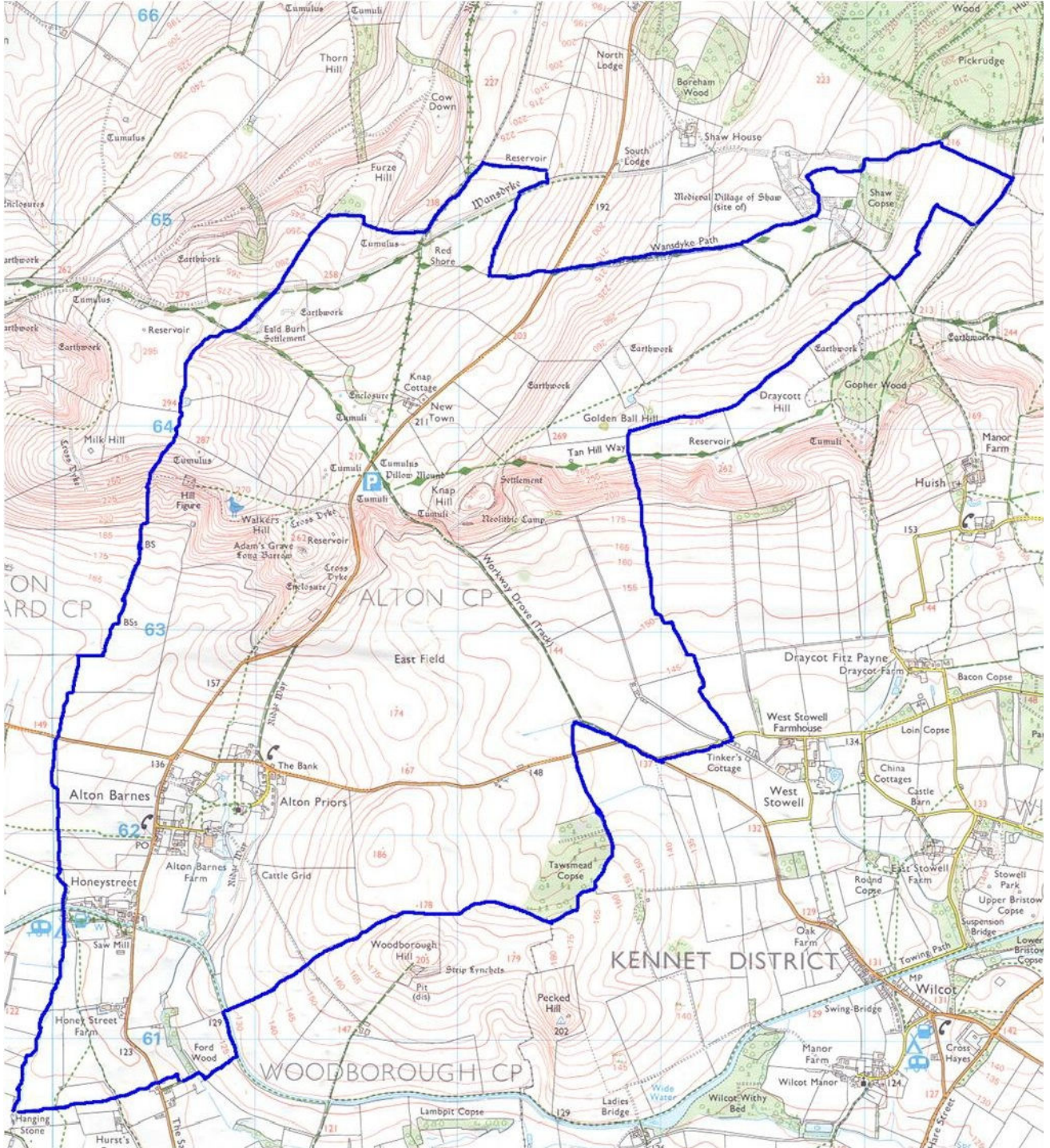
Looking towards the Alton White Horse  
across winter oil seed rape at East Field

The two villages are separated by a natural spring and stream which is one of the headwaters of the River Avon that runs south towards Salisbury. The permanent pasture around the spring forms a central green core between the two villages. The houses in Alton Priors are situated on slightly higher and dryer ground to the east; many of these houses face out onto open fields at the back with few obstructions to block the views. Likewise in Alton Barnes the properties are on slightly higher land. Many of the properties along the main road have uninterrupted views across arable land to the west towards the parish boundary and beyond.

The whole area is part of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and includes a National Nature Reserve and SSSI of international importance on the downland. The Downs are traversed by the Ridgeway and there are many ancient archaeological sites on the surrounding hills. The area is rich in history displaying how man has lived and worked in the landscape for thousands of years. Large areas of both villages are within the Alton Conservation Area and are already a subject of separate character appraisal and management proposals.



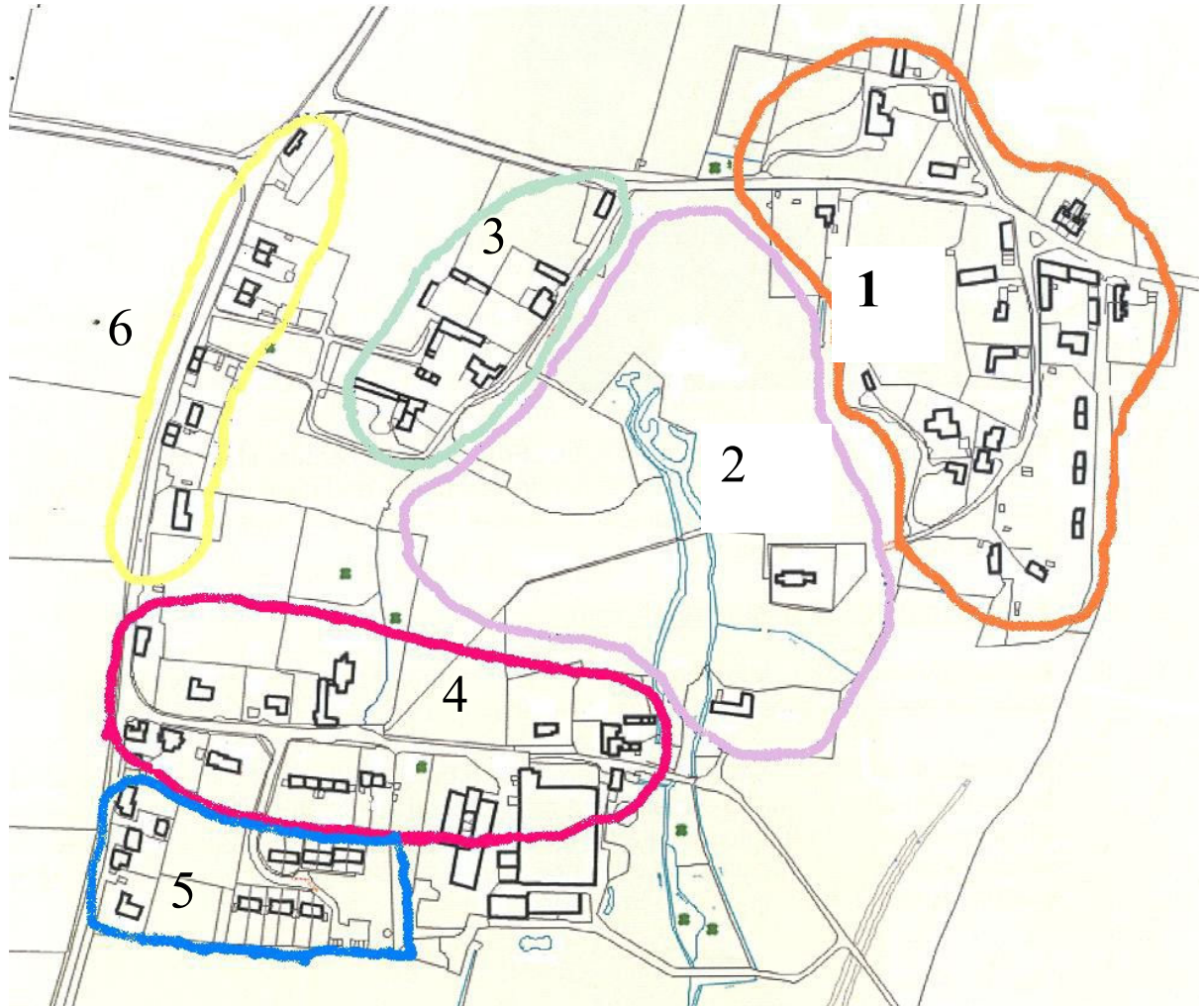
# Alton Parish Boundary





## The built environment

The Alton conservation area appraisal identifies five different areas or character zones within the Alton Barnes and Alton Priors conservation area, There is a sixth zone to the south of Alton Barnes which is outside the conservation area.





## The village of Alton Priors



In this tiny village or hamlet, with approximately 30 dwellings, one of the main characteristics of the differing properties is the way they are sited with apparent informality. There are no modern estate developments and no continuously built up frontages. Most properties have large spaces and gardens between them giving an open atmosphere to the village and preserving glimpses to the surrounding farmland. There are 11 listed buildings or objects within Alton Priors and 15 others of „townscape merit“. Together they form the bulk of the buildings within the village, emphasizing its unique qualities. There is no one dominant design style, with buildings dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> century to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **The central open pasture land of Alton Priors and Alton Barnes**

This area links the two villages with cobbled footpaths from which there are superb views of the hills. Just two buildings are in this zone: the church and one dwelling, The Priory, nearby.

All Saints church in Alton Priors has had many alterations over the years. Of the Norman original structure only the chancel arch remains intact. The nave was rebuilt and widened towards the south during the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The brick chancel is an early 19th-century rebuilding reusing the old Perpendicular window tracery. Both nave and chancel roofs were renewed in the 18th century and repaired in the 19th century. The nave was restored during the late-19th century. The low stone-tiled roof of the tower has a modern weathercock, recently gilded in memory of Simon Whistler, a local glass engraver and musician.



All Saints church in Alton Priors has had many alterations over the years.

The church is now largely redundant and the building is looked after by The Churches Conservation Trust. Within the church yard is a Yew tree certified to be over 1700 years old. Each year „Music for Awhile“ perform concerts in this magnificent setting with the church lit by candle light as part of the summer festival.

The historic footpaths across this often wet green area are considered essential for pedestrians and need to be fully maintained. This includes weed killing on the cobbled paths, cutting back overhanging vegetation and maintaining the bridges over the streams.

## The village of Alton Barnes

Alton Barnes is the larger of the two villages, with approximately 58 dwellings. To the north, Browns Lane (pictured below) is a single track lane which peters out into a farm track at its southern end. It provides access to Browns Cottage, Chandlers House, Maslens Farm and byway access to Neates Farm. The latter 3 properties are all listed and Browns Cottage has been identified as of „townscape“ merit.



The central area covers the properties on either side of the street leading to St Mary's Church and the listed house at Manor Farm. The properties differ greatly in styles and materials. The church dates from Saxon times. Other buildings include the Old School, now a private home but once having over 100 children on its roll, the Old Rectory which is also listed, and the contrasting Rectory Cottages. Rectory Cottages were former local authority properties and built without off street parking. This poses problems for the local residents due to the limited space available for cars.



Rectory Close and Wynn Street are outside the compass of the Alton Conservation Area appraisal and differ in character. The properties were built in the 1950s with a small modern development in the early 2000s.

Within this area is the village playground which serves the communities of Alton Barnes/Alton Priors and Honeystreet. It is well used virtually all year. The playing field is owned by the Council and Alton Parish Council following a Community Asset Transfer in 2012. In the latter part of 2008 new equipment was installed after five years of fund-raising. The former Kennet District Council provided a grant of £20,000 and an additional £10,000 was raised by local villagers.



Finally, the Woodborough to Lockeridge Road contains 10 properties previously identified as having „townscape merit“. The oldest buildings in this group front directly onto the road. Later buildings are set further back. At Oxford Cottages some privacy is provided by a thick hedge which also helps filter some of the noise from passing traffic. Upstairs windows provide uninterrupted views to the west across the open arable fields. Coronation Hall stands back from the road but does not harmonise with the other properties. Its utilitarian structure, white walls and metal roof ensure it is visible from the approaching Stanton Road as well as from the Downs. Hedge planting at the rear will reduce its visibility from Browns Lane track area and hopefully as the trees grow its impact when viewed from the hills will be reduced.

## Summary

**What all the areas have in common is well-spaced properties, in a largely peaceful rural setting. Most houses sit harmoniously in their surroundings. This good quality environment has to be respected and protected from any excessive building or infilling of the much-valued green spaces. This community view is clearly born out in responses to the VDS questionnaire.**

In answer to the question about what was valued most about the present character of the Altons, the most common response was for the peace and quiet coupled with the location or setting of the village. Others also cited a sense of community within the

villages. There is no doubt that the residents do not want any significant infilling or developments to take place. A clear majority were against more houses of executive estate style or development out of character with existing properties. Certainly residents do not want industrial or large businesses to be run from or within the village. Future planning should take this into account.

## Farming

Manor Farm has been tenanted by the Stratton/Carson family for four generations. The land, approximately 2,250 acres, is owned by New College Oxford. In 1980 750 acres of hill land at Newtown was let to sheep farmer David Oliphant of Honeystreet.

The last 60 years has probably seen the greatest upheaval in agriculture of any period in history. Until the end of the twentieth century farming in Alton followed a conventional pattern, with dairy, sheep, and beef. Arable land was managed on a strict rotation. The sheep disappeared in the 1960s and at that time a partnership was made with English Nature (now Natural England) to manage the Downs.

Since then the Downs have been designated a European Bio-Reserve, an SSSI and also became part of North Wessex Downs of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Natural England has a grazing agreement since 1960 which includes keeping ragwort and hawthorn under control but for some time the latter has not proved effective. If this situation is to be reversed pressure on Natural England by the Parish Council, the tenants of Manor Farm and the people of Alton is essential – supported, if possible, by Wiltshire Council. There is evidence from the questionnaire that some of the local residents would be happy to volunteer and work in a three way partnership to remove the ragwort.

Council houses were built at Alton Priors between the wars and at Alton Barnes in the 1950s, on land given by New College and released from the farm by Guy Stratton. The land for the playing field, originally attached to the village school, was also given. The site of the Coronation Hall, built to replace the tithe barn burnt down in 1950, was given by the Church Commissioners and money was raised by the community to build it.

All the important farm buildings are now listed. However any that become surplus to the farm's requirements could be considered for redevelopment by New College. The

thatched cart shed at Alton Priors was recently under scrutiny. A previous example of such redevelopment can be seen at The Granary in Alton Priors.



Redundant farm building redeveloped for housing at The Granary

Recently two areas of woodland have been planted. Both have had a grant from the Forestry Commission, which ensures that they are protected woodland. Tawsmead Copse has been replanted and Nature Strips and Beetle Banks have been established around most arable acreage. This has created very welcome permissive footpaths and bridleways. Hedge planting has also been part of the environmental plan.



Some of the grass land has been taken out of production and is currently used by an equestrian enterprise.

It is possible the tenants of Manor Farm may further reduce the arable acreage to 1000 acres. They intend to continue using contract labour during the crop production cycle. Contract grazing for heifers on the permanent pasture in Alton is also expected to continue. On the Downs it is hoped that the beef herd enterprise will continue.

This forms part of the management agreement with Natural England and adds diversity to the Manor Farm business.



On the hill farm at Newtown, under different management, the land which runs up to nearly 300 metres above sea level is largely grazed by sheep.

Farms have to respond to changing markets just as other enterprises and diversify when necessary. The influence that agricultural practice has on the local environment is key to the wellbeing of the community in its widest sense.

From the responses to the first and second questions in the village survey the attractive outlook from the village over the agricultural land and escarpments is what has brought many new people to the villages within the Alton Parish. 54% of those who responded had settled in the last 10 years. Just less than a quarter had been resident for more than 20 years.

## Business and Tourism

Business is a vital part of a community; it provides jobs, daytime activity and individuals who have a vested interest in being part of a community. Without business activity a village can become nothing more than housing for commuters and retired people. Although these are a vital part of the make up of the village, local employment is also essential. Ten years ago the official social and economic classification of Alton Barnes, according to the ACORN classification was agricultural, rural arts and craft, similar to the Shetland Islands. This has now changed to the status of retirement and commuter housing for surrounding towns.

Outside farming the only business enterprises are the horse livery and gypsy caravan rental businesses. Within the village there is however a growing community of home-based workers including several artists, writers, musicians, a photographer and business consultants. In addition there are office workers who occasionally work from home as part of flexible working.

Home based roles are going to become more frequent as internet technologies allow people to work more flexibly and higher business rents make home working financially attractive for the self employed. It will also be vital in ensuring the village continues as an active community not just commuter housing. This means that residents may want to develop offices as part of house extensions, outbuildings or adapt existing outbuildings.

**Many villages have benefited from the adaptation of outdated farm buildings into offices that allow residents with small, 1-3 person, businesses to operate close to home and provide very local and flexible employment. This could be considered as suitable development.**

Tourism is a major source of income to Wiltshire as a whole. The major problem however is that many tourists do not stay in Wiltshire, especially in the smaller towns and villages. Tourism can help revitalise a community but it has to be proportionate and in scale with the existing community.

Currently there is one tourism enterprise in the Altons – White Horse Caravans - which provides horse-drawn gypsy caravan holidays. Although not included in this Village Design Statement, The Barge Inn, Honeystreet, generates local and tourist income both as an attractive pub on the canal and from a campsite. There are few places for people to stay in the local area excepting the bed and breakfast just south of Honeystreet. Several tour companies offer tours to Stonehenge and Avebury passing through the Altons, but without benefit to the community. Each summer an increasing number of visitors arrive to view the local crop circles.

There are relevant and sustainable ways that Alton could benefit from tourism. One is the development of bed and breakfast accommodation within the villages to attract visitors who would enjoy staying close to the walks offered in the local vicinity – the Ridgeway, Wansdyke, White Horse Trails, the Kennet and Avon Canal and the Downs. Another might be the introduction of guided walking and historical tours that would generate further interest in the countryside surrounding the villages. These could culminate in a visit to The Barge Inn – in order to try to keep some of the tourist cash within the local community.

**Any tourist development within the Altons must be sustainable and proportionate to the inherently rural nature of the small villages and be respectful of the fact that this is a Conservation Area and AONB.**



# Wildlife and Conservation

In terms of wildlife and conservation there are four distinct areas within Alton Parish. These are:

1. The central meadows and stream.
2. The open farmland.
3. Kennet and Avon canal.
4. Nature reserves on the downs.

Most of the area is intensively farmed, but there are places which have been left to the wildlife. Declines in recent years have been seen in most of the butterfly and bee populations. Swifts ceased to breed when the house roof they used was renovated. Water voles disappeared when released mink reached the canal. The diversity of habitats has ensured a healthy bat population in the area.

Central meadows and stream. The meadows are mainly of improved grassland, but there are remnants of the natural flora in a few wet areas near the stream. Brooklime, marsh ragwort, marsh marigold and ragged robin are some which can still be found. The woodland along the stream is alive with birdsong in spring and migrant warblers Chiffchaff and Blackcap breed along with the resident birds. There is a flourishing rookery of up to 100 nests.

Open farmland. This is dominated by wheat and rape with an interesting bean field in 2008, which had a flock of 300 Golden Plover on it in April and a family of Yellow Wagtails and a pair of Reed Buntings in July. The rape is a food source for wood pigeons in winter and spring, and in summer, finches and buntings eat the seeds. The fields in winter have Lapwings, Golden Plover, Skylarks, Meadow Pipits and at dawn and dusk the resident Barn Owls can be seen. In summer, some cornfield weeds like Heartsease, Fools Parsley, Mayweeds and various thistles and sow-thistles survive the herbicide. There are 6-metre strips left around many of the fields and where these are adjacent to the nature reserves, they are acquiring downland flora and the associated insects. Grey squirrels and roe deer are flourishing and there are still hares on the farmland.

On a national basis seed and insect eating birds are in decline. Some of the active conservation measures adopted by Manor Farm have helped some local birds to hold on where they have disappeared from other apparently similar areas.

Canal This small stretch of the Kennet and Avon Canal has a variety of typical waterside plants and has had unusual bird visitors such as Little Egret, Common Tern and Cormorant. It provides a good place for Sedge Warblers and passing Kingfishers are not unusual.

Downland The nature reserve is an excellent place for walkers, ornithologists and botanists. Many migrating spring and autumn ground feeding birds use the reserve and surrounding fields as a staging point. Other birds make the downs their chosen breeding site. These species include Meadow Pipits and Skylarks. Several raptor species have been observed hunting over the downs including some rarities. While some do breed locally most are passing through including in autumn 2008 a Red Kite and a number of Honey Buzzards. The downland supports approximately 28 resident breeding species of butterfly and several orchid species especially the Fragrant Orchid, Butterfly Orchid and Bee Orchid. Spring time sees masses of Cowslips and early Gentians.

One of the roles of Natural England is to encourage people to enjoy the Nature



Reserve; however the increase in visitor numbers is having an impact. There has been a significant amount of footpath erosion across the escarpment footpath leading to The White Horse. Additionally, inappropriately large white notices have been placed on the hill, which can be seen for miles. This was highlighted in responses to the VDS questionnaire.

Hopefully Natural England will review their policy on display boards.

The car park near Newtown has become a popular overnight or prolonged stay camping ground. In 2008 up to 15 tents, caravans and assorted vehicles were counted as having stayed overnight some staying for months before being moved on. It is recommended that the Parish Council will strongly urge Wiltshire Council to issue a bye law forbidding overnight stays. Such a bye law will have to be rigorously enforced if the annual cycle is to be broken. Similarly, some boats at 24-hour moorings on the canal overstay for long periods. We urge the Canal and River Trust (formerly British Waterways) to enforce its rules.

## Road traffic, street signage, transport and communication.

Everyone who replied to the VDS questionnaire owned a car, with just over half of the households owning two. Car use is a necessity due to the relative isolation of the villages. The nearest railway station is at Pewsey, 5 miles away. Pewsey also has the nearest small supermarket; those wanting greater variety have to travel to Devizes, Marlborough or beyond. Of those people-responding to the survey who were at the time employed, 8 worked from home, another 8 worked within 10 miles of Alton, while another 8 worked further away. This necessitates a regular movement out of the village each day and a return each evening by car. The local but infrequent bus service is important especially for those who do not have a car or cannot drive. A recently introduced night taxi service is appreciated by those who use it.

The gradual proliferation of roadside signs has raised some concerns locally. Speeding road users cause genuine concern; 50% of the respondents to the questionnaire would like more effective traffic calming around the village with only 23% against this idea. Better enforcement of current speed limits is the most frequent suggestion, while the community appears evenly split on the idea of use of enforcement cameras and more signs. Speed bumps are not favoured. Perceived excessive speed and the movement of large goods vehicles on the narrow country roads is a genuine concern for residents, especially those with young children. This impact is felt on the north-south road in Alton Barnes and east-west routes through Alton Priors. There are no roadside footpaths for pedestrians. While footpaths across the central pastures do provide a link these are not feasible for families with prams. There is no direct footpath between Alton Barnes and Honeystreet where the nearest public house is to be found.

The Parish has a network of footpaths (see next page) leading up to the Pewsey Downs from the vale. These include part of Tan Hill Way, the White Horse Trail using a southern extension of the old Ridgeway, and the Kennet & Avon canal towpath. Part of the Wansdyke crosses the northern end of the Parish. In addition there are large areas of open access land and permissive rights of way around the headlands of the arable fields. The north-south road through Alton Barnes is part of the national Cycle Route 45.

As the result of increased headland width some footpaths shown have been neglected and become overgrown including a section coming down from the Ridgeway known locally as The Hollow. If agricultural subsidy levels decline there may be pressure to return these headlands back to arable production and the new access routes would be lost. **It is essential that the old rights of way are kept open and fit for use before large scale work is needed to restore them.**



# Footpaths in the Parish of Alton



Communications A successful campaign was launched in 2002 to get broadband internet services to the village via the Woodborough telephone exchange. Alton Priors is the furthest away in the Parish from the local BT exchange and has slower broadband connection speeds as a result. High speed connections unfortunately seem a long way off but should be encouraged whenever the opportunities arise.



There is only one phone box in the Parish and it is listed. Its importance cannot be stressed too much. Alton Priors is in an exceptionally poor mobile phone reception area with only patchy coverage to one or two service providers.

As phone lines are carried to most houses by overhead wires, service faults to private houses are not uncommon. In emergencies the call box could be essential for contacting the

rescue services. The state of the phone box should be regularly monitored and lack of service or vandalism reported. Additional comments provided in response to the questionnaire requested that where possible public utilities should remove overhead cables as they come up for repair or renewal. This would visually enhance the local environment and reduce risks of power failures or broken telephone connections, and make it safer for tall-sided farm vehicles.

## Planning and future developments

No village can remain in a time warp. Changes however have to be fully assessed against rigorous criteria which should not be compromised.

The survey for The Village Design Statement clearly illustrates that the local population does not want new developments of executive style estates. Conversely 73% of respondents suggested that they would appreciate more affordable housing for local families or accommodation for single, young or elderly members of the local community. Finding a suitable site will be difficult and will continue to be explored.

Where more recent development has taken place in Alton Priors the controversy has first been about possible over-development with loss of views and secondly the inappropriate differentiation between old and new parts of a property. Additional comments from the questionnaire show support for locally produced thatching straw to be used on roofs. New buildings should use some of the best design features and materials found elsewhere in the two villages. This will help to ensure visual harmony within the area.

Typical features around the villages include a thatched cob garden wall (Shell Cottage); wheat thatch (Kates Cottage, Ridgeway Cottage, Maslens Farm, the Cartshed); modern thatch (Monks Hollow); arched windows (Yew Tree Cottage, The Bank, The Old Rectory, etc); and much use of sarsen.

## Planning Framework

The Kennet Landscape Conservation Strategy (May 2005), which has Supplementary Planning Guidance status, places the Alton villages within the Vale of Pewsey Landscape Character Area, where "Enhancement Priorities" include:

- 1 Encourage repair, replanting and widespread extension of hedgerow network and development of mature trees, using native species typical of this locality;
- 2 Maintain existing roadside hedgerows and trees, including avenues, and replace where these have been removed or weakened by neglect or Dutch Elm disease;
- 3 Encourage less intensive farming practices on more open arable and improved grassland on the fringes of the Vale and encourage the introduction of natural vegetation cover in field headlands and margins; and
- 4 Improve landscape structure and land management on the fringes of settlements and along main roads, to mitigate adverse impacts on the landscape.

Nearly all of Alton is a designated Conservation Area where stricter than usual planning policy applies. The safeguards for planning in the Conservation Area are comprehensively set out in the Alton Conservation Area Statement (2006). The document has Supplementary Planning Guidance status.

**Any new planning consents must conform with the relevant policies in the current statutory development plan.**

Parts of the eastern and southern boundaries of the villages are designated as 'Archaeological Zones' in the Kennet Local Plan. The County Archaeological Officer should be informed of any planning proposals in these areas and may suggest that archaeological evaluation or excavation work should be undertaken in connection with any new development. Archaeological sites of significant regional or local importance will be protected from inappropriate development (KDLP Policy HH1, to be superseded by Wiltshire Core Strategy Policy CP58 once adopted).

It is strongly recommended that the fields containing remains of earlier houses and a mill at Alton Priors (near the church) should be included within the archaeological zones.



## Survey results summary

The main priorities identified by the Design Statement survey are:

Preservation of the present character of the Altons

Preservation of views from within the village

No significant change or developments, especially executive estates

No large industrial businesses

Tourist enterprises should be proportional to the sizes of the villages

New bye law forbidding overnight stays in Newtown car park

Identification of potential for affordable housing for local families

Improved maintenance of footpaths

Natural England to use discreet signs on the downs

Improved traffic calming

Minimise use of street furniture

Removal of overhead utility wires

BT phone box to be fully maintained

Inclusion within the archaeological zone of the fields containing remains of earlier houses and mill at Alton Priors (near the church)

Steps should be taken to control Ragwort

## Recommendations

Alton Barnes and Priors are protected by important designations and care must be taken to ensure that new development is compatible with the special character of the area. The villages lie within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Government's policy on AONBs is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Any new planning consents must conform with the current statutory development plan.**

**The area is characterized by well-spaced properties, in a largely peaceful rural setting. Most houses sit harmoniously in their surroundings. This good quality environment has to be respected and protected from any excessive building or infilling of the much-valued green spaces.**

**Our survey clearly illustrates that the local population does not want new developments of executive style estates. Conversely 73% of respondents suggested that they would appreciate more affordable housing for local families or accommodation for single, young or elderly members of the community.**

**New buildings should use some of the best design features and materials found elsewhere in the two villages. This will help to ensure visual harmony within the area. Typical features around the villages include a thatched cob garden wall (Shell Cottage); what thatch (Kates Cottage, Ridgeway Cottage, Maslens Farm, the Cartshed); modern thatch (Monks Hollow); arched windows (Yew Tree Cottage, The Bank, The Old Rectory etc); and much use of sarsen.**

**Many villages have benefited from the adaptation of redundant farm buildings into offices that allow residents with small businesses to operate close to home and provide very local and flexible employment. This could be considered as suitable development.**

**Tourist development, while welcome, must be sustainable and proportionate to the inherently rural nature of the small villages and be respectful of the fact that this is a conservation area and AONB.**

**The Downs are designated a European Bio-Reserve and an SSSI. Natural England has a grazing agreement which includes a commitment to keep ragwort and hawthorn under control. For some time this has not proved effective. It is important that the problem is now addressed. Natural England is also urged to reconsider the obtrusive and unsightly signs it has erected. It is essential that the old rights of way are kept open and fit for use.**

**The County Archaeological Officer should be informed of any planning proposals in the designated Archaeological Zones. It is strongly recommended that the fields containing remains of earlier houses and mill at Alton Priors (near the church) should be included within these zones.**



**Speed limits on local roads should be more effectively enforced; but increased signage and/or speed bumps should be avoided.**

**The one telephone box in the Parish, where mobile phone reception is very poor, could be vital in emergency and must be maintained. Improved broadband connections should be encouraged. Overhead cables should be removed wherever possible.**

## Appendix - Listed buildings in the Altons

- [003/001](#) Church of St Mary, Alton Barnes, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4LB
- [003/002](#) The Old Rectory, Alton Barnes, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4LB
- [003/003](#) Alton Barnes Manor Farmhouse, Alton Barnes, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4LB
- [003/004](#) Chandlers House, Alton Barnes, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4JZ
- [003/005](#) Maslen's Farmhouse, Alton Barnes, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4JZ
- [003/006](#) Neate's Farmhouse, Alton Barnes, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4JZ
- [003/007](#) 8, Alton Barnes, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4LB
- [003/008](#) The Priory, Alton Barnes, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4LB
- [003/009](#) Church of All Saints, Alton Priors, Marlborough, Wiltshire
- [003/010](#) The Manor House, Alton Priors, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4JX
- [003/011](#) Manor Cottage, Alton Priors, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4JX
- [003/012](#) Wall to Kitchen Garden of Former Manor Farm, Alton Priors, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4JX
- [003/013](#) Barn, Alton Priors Farm, Alton Priors, Marlborough, Wiltshire
- [003/014](#) Carhouse, Alton Priors Farm, Alton Priors, Marlborough, Wiltshire
- [003/015](#) Granary, Alton Priors Farm, Alton Priors, Marlborough, Wiltshire
- [003/016](#) Pear Tree and Yew Tree Cottage, Alton Priors, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4JX
- [003/017](#) Kate Gray's Cottage, Alton Priors, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4JX
- [003/018](#) K6 Telephone Kiosk, Alton Priors, Marlborough, Wiltshire

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# Village Design Statement Protocol

November 2012

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In 1996 the Countryside Commission (now Natural England) launched the 'Design in the Countryside' initiative, and produced advisory packs to help villages understand the concept, process and method of producing a Village Design Statement (VDS).
- 1.2 The purpose of VDSs is to manage change, whether that change is major new development or just cumulative, small-scale additions and alterations. They are not about whether development should take place but about how planned development should be carried out, so that it is in harmony with its setting and contributes to the conservation and, where possible, enhancement, of the local environment.
- 1.3 VDSs are prepared by local communities. They offer a framework for engaging local people in constructive debate about defining the special character of their village, as a basis for ensuring that new development in their area fits its surroundings and is in keeping with that character. The VDS can help everyone involved in a development to understand local views and perceptions at the outset of the design process. This helps new buildings to be designed in a way that is more likely to gain local support, rather than generate opposition. VDSs provide a tool to help manage long-term change, not prevent it.
- 1.4 Some development in villages is both healthy and desirable to maintain thriving village communities. A VDS offers a positive way for local people to ensure that the nature and quality of development makes a natural progression from village past into village future. In particular, the VDS helps to manage change and demonstrate how new and locally distinctive design can add to the visual quality of the village.
- 1.5 A VDS contains a descriptive analysis of the relationship between landscape, settlement patterns and buildings and describes the qualities and characteristics that people value in their village and its surroundings. From the survey analysis the VDS identifies principles to be applied to new developments, such as the design of buildings and the spaces between them. The document should benefit local people, developers, new occupants and planners.
- 1.6 An effective VDS:
- is developed, researched, written and edited by local people;
  - is representative of the views of the village as a whole;
  - has involved a wide section of the village community in its production;
  - describes the visual character of the village;
  - demonstrates how local character and distinctiveness can be protected and enhanced in new development;
  - is compatible with the statutory planning system and the local planning context;
  - is applicable to all forms and scale of development;
  - is about managing change in the village, not preventing it.

## **2.0 What status should be given to VDSs?**

- 2.1 Many communities across Wiltshire have already prepared VDSs which are awaiting formal recognition and acknowledgement from the council.
- 2.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 has changed the way VDSs can be adopted by local planning authorities. Previously, they could be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (as referred to in the Countryside Commission's guidance). However, this has been replaced by Supplementary Planning Documents which have more stringent and onerous requirements.
- 2.3 Currently, VDSs can either be approved by a local planning authority as a material planning consideration or adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents. Both material considerations and Supplementary Planning Documents must be considered for all planning applications along with all the other relevant planning guidance.
- 2.4 However, for a VDS to achieve status as a Supplementary Planning Document, the document must fulfil statutory requirements for public consultation and undergo rigorous consultation, and hence the process can be time consuming. It is therefore considered more appropriate to approve VDSs as material planning considerations, rather than adopting as Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 2.5 The wording of the council constitution allows for this, advising that one of the roles of the area committees is:
- “To consider matters of local importance within the area such as:*
- *VDSs and parish plans where council approval is required for them to be considered as material considerations in dealing with planning applications”*
- 2.6 Approving VDSs as material planning considerations is a much faster and simplified way forward. Their approval by committee, following an officer appraisal of the VDS including an assessment of the robustness of the consultation undertaken to inform its preparation, gives the documents weight in decision making. The council in approving VDSs as a material consideration will ensure that these are taken into account in determining planning applications.
- 2.7 It is also important to note that by approving VDSs as material planning considerations, the VDSs will also always be owned by the village or parish that undertakes the work.
- 2.8 If approved as a material planning consideration, the VDSs will assist in making decisions upon planning applications, through the Development Management process. VDSs have also been given weight by planning inspectors in individual planning appeal cases.

## **3.0 VDS Validation Checklist**

- 3.1 It would be unrealistic to expect the council to approve a VDS as a material consideration if the VDS did not fulfil the remit of a VDS, for example, if it conflicted with the council's own planning policies. The information contained within a VDS will need to be used by planners, designers and developers and should be straightforward, clear and unambiguous. To achieve this, the

production of the VDS has to be structured and well organised. While the document belongs to the local community, it is necessary to assess how they interpret relevant existing planning policies. They must be robust enough for planning officers to put them into active use in decisions on applications.

3.2 The VDSs will therefore need to be assessed against a validation checklist. This checklist is based on the former Countryside Commission's VDS guidance, and seeks to ensure that the VDSs are fit for purpose:

(i) **Does the VDS describe the distinctive character of the village and the surrounding countryside?**

For example, to meet this objective, the VDS could include:

- A brief description of geographical and historic background.
- A short description of the village as it is today.
- The people, economics and future prospects.
- Any special considerations that affect development pressures in the village, such as tourism or mineral extraction, etc.

(ii) **Does the VDS show how character can be identified at three levels?**

- The landscape setting of the village.
- The shape of the settlement.
- The nature of the buildings themselves.

#### **The character of the landscape setting**

- The visual character of the surrounding countryside.
- The relationship between the surrounding countryside and the village edges.
- The relationship between the village and any special landscape features, such as ancient monuments, woodlands or nature reserves.
- Buildings seen in the landscape, e.g. farm buildings.

#### **Settlement pattern character**

- Overall pattern of village, distinct zones and layouts.
- Character of streets and routes through the village.
- Character and pattern of open spaces in the village and connections with the wider countryside.
- The relationship between buildings and spaces.

#### **Buildings and spaces in the village**

- The character of distinct areas of building types in the village.
- The height, scale and density of buildings.
- The mixture of sizes, styles and types of buildings.
- Hedges, walls and fences.
- Distinctive village features, materials or building details.

(iii) **Does the VDS draw up design principles based on the distinctive local character?**

Are the design principles locally specific, rather than just repeating good practice/design principles?

(iv) **Does the VDS work in the context of existing local planning policy and influence future policies?**

The scope and content of the VDS must be both relevant and complementary to the local planning context.

The importance of compatibility between the VDS and the statutory planning process cannot be over estimated. A good working partnership with the local planning authority will be of particular value when the VDS is used in the planning process.

(v) **Has the VDS been developed, researched, written and edited by local people? Is it representative of the views of the village as a whole? Has the process involved a wide section of the village community in its production?**

It is important to ensure the council does not influence a VDS to the extent that it does not accurately represent the views of the community. The more people who are involved, and contribute to the production of the VDS, the better. It must not just represent the view of a single interest group; it has to be seen to be a shared and representative view of the village as a whole.

Consultation needs to be undertaken from the outset of the project and the programme of action and range of methods used should be well documented.

- Always try to stress that the VDS is the view of the village and not that of the local planning authority.

3.3 A template summarising these validation criteria will be used to assess each VDS to ensure it is fit for purpose. This is appended to this protocol.

**APPENDIX**  
**VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT VALIDATION CHECKLIST TEMPLATE**

## Village Design Statement Validation Checklist

<b>Village Design Statement for:</b>	
<b>(i) Does the VDS describe the distinctive character of the village and the surrounding countryside?</b>	
<b>(ii) Does the VDS show how character can be identified at three levels:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The landscape setting of the village</li> <li>• The shape of the settlement</li> <li>• The nature of the buildings themselves</li> </ul>	
<b>(iii) Does the VDS draw up design principles based on the distinctive local character?</b>	
<b>(iv) Does the VDS work in partnership with the local planning authority in the context of existing local planning policy and influence future policies.</b>	
<b>(v) Has the VDS been developed, researched, written and edited by local people? Is it representative of the views of the village as a whole? Has the process involved a wide section of the village community in its production?</b>	
<b>Other comments:</b>	
<b>Overall Conclusions:</b>	
<b>Recommendation:</b>	



<b>Village Design Statement Validation Checklist</b>	
<b>Village Design Statement for:</b>	<b>The Altons</b>
<b>(i) Does the VDS describe the distinctive character of the village and the surrounding countryside?</b>	<p>The VDS presents the Altons as five separate character zones, as identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal, and goes on to describe these character zones (see section entitled “The Built Environment”). The VDS also describes how agricultural practice has influenced the local environment (see section entitled “Farming”). The Wildlife and Conservation section describes how there are four distinct areas within Alton Parish and goes on to describe these areas, which all contribute towards the character of the Parish and the surrounding countryside.</p>
<b>(ii) Does the VDS show how character can be identified at three levels</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>the landscape setting of the village</b></li> </ul>	<p>The section entitled “The Setting” describes how The Altons are set amidst highly productive arable farmlands which dominate the immediate surroundings. This provides for many unobstructed views to the chalk escarpment of the Pewsey Downs to the north including that to the Alton White Horse.</p> <p>Alton Barnes and Alton Priors are separated by a natural spring and stream which is one of the headwaters of the River Avon that runs south towards Salisbury. The permanent pasture around the spring forms a central green core between the two villages.</p> <p>The whole area is part of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and includes a National Nature Reserve and SSSI of international importance on the downland. The area is traversed by the Ridgeway and there are many ancient archaeological sites on the surrounding hills.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>the shape of the settlement</b></li> </ul>	<p>The map in the section entitled “The Built Environment” illustrates the shape of The Altons. This section goes on to describe how most of the properties are well-spaced with large spaces and gardens between them.</p>

## Village Design Statement Validation Checklist

<b>Village Design Statement for:</b>	<b>The Altons</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>the nature of the buildings themselves</b></li> </ul>	<p>The section entitled “The Built Environment” introduces five different areas taken from the Alton Conservation Area Appraisal. This section then goes on to describe each of these areas, including reference to the nature of the buildings themselves. Under the section entitled “Planning and future developments”, typical features of buildings in the villages are described, including wheat thatch, modern thatch and arched windows.</p>
<p><b>(iii) Does the VDS draw up design principles based on the distinctive local character?</b></p>	<p>Throughout the VDS, a detailed description of the local character of The Altons is provided. Design principles are then provided throughout the document based on this character. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Section 2 “The Built Environment” draws out design principles based on the distinctive local character of Alton Priors and Alton Barnes, which are characterised by “well-spaced properties in a largely peaceful rural setting”.</li> <li>- Section 4 “Business and Tourism” summarises that “any tourist development within The Altons must be sustainable and proportionate to the inherently rural nature of the small villages and be respectful of the fact that this is a Conservation Area and AONB.”</li> <li>- Section 7 “Planning and Future Developments”- provides examples of existing typical design features in the villages and advises that new buildings should use some of the best design features and material found in the villages.</li> </ul>
<p><b>(iv) Does the VDS work in partnership with the local planning authority in the context of existing local planning policy and influence future policies.</b></p>	<p>The introduction explains that (the former) Kennet District Council was contacted at various stages in the production of the VDS for help and advice. The VDS recognises that any development must conform to the current statutory development plan.</p>

## Village Design Statement Validation Checklist

<b>Village Design Statement for:</b>	<b>The Altons</b>
<b>(v) Has the VDS been developed, researched, written and edited by local people? Is it representative of the views of the village as a whole? Has the process involved a wide section of the village community in its production?</b>	The Introduction explains that in 2007 a group of volunteers independent from the Parish Council produced a questionnaire to ascertain the views of the local residents about the future of The Altons. Every property was provided with a questionnaire to complete. Replies were collected and analysed. Members of the community with specific expertise or interests were asked to contribute key sections and the initial draft of the VDS was passed to the Parish Council for comment.
<b>Overall Conclusions:</b>	It is considered that the VDS is fit for purpose and complies with the validation criteria.
<b>Recommendation:</b>	It is recommended that the Village Design Statement for The Altons be approved as a material consideration for the purposes of development management.

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## REPORT TO THE EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

Report No. 1

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	03-04-2014
<b>Application Number</b>	13/03736/FUL
<b>Site Address</b>	Fernbank, Chimney Lane, Honeystreet, Pewsey, Wiltshire, Sn9 5PS
<b>Proposal</b>	Demolition of two dwellings and the erection of three dwellings and associated works.
<b>Applicant</b>	Ms J Niel and Mrs B Trowbridge
<b>Town/Parish Council</b>	ALTON
<b>Grid Ref</b>	
<b>Type of application</b>	Full Planning
<b>Case Officer</b>	Rachel Yeomans

### Reason for the application being considered by Committee

This application has been called to committee at the request of Councillor Oatway.

### 1. Purpose of Report

To consider the officer recommendation that planning permission be granted with conditions.

### 2. Report Summary

The key issues for consideration are;

- The principle of residential development in this location.
- Whether the development would be in harmony with the village in terms of its scale and character.
- Impact on visual amenity, the AONB landscape, trees and the Kennet and Avon canal and trees.
- Highway safety
- Impact on residential amenity including noise
- Impact on protected species and their habitats

### 3. Site Description

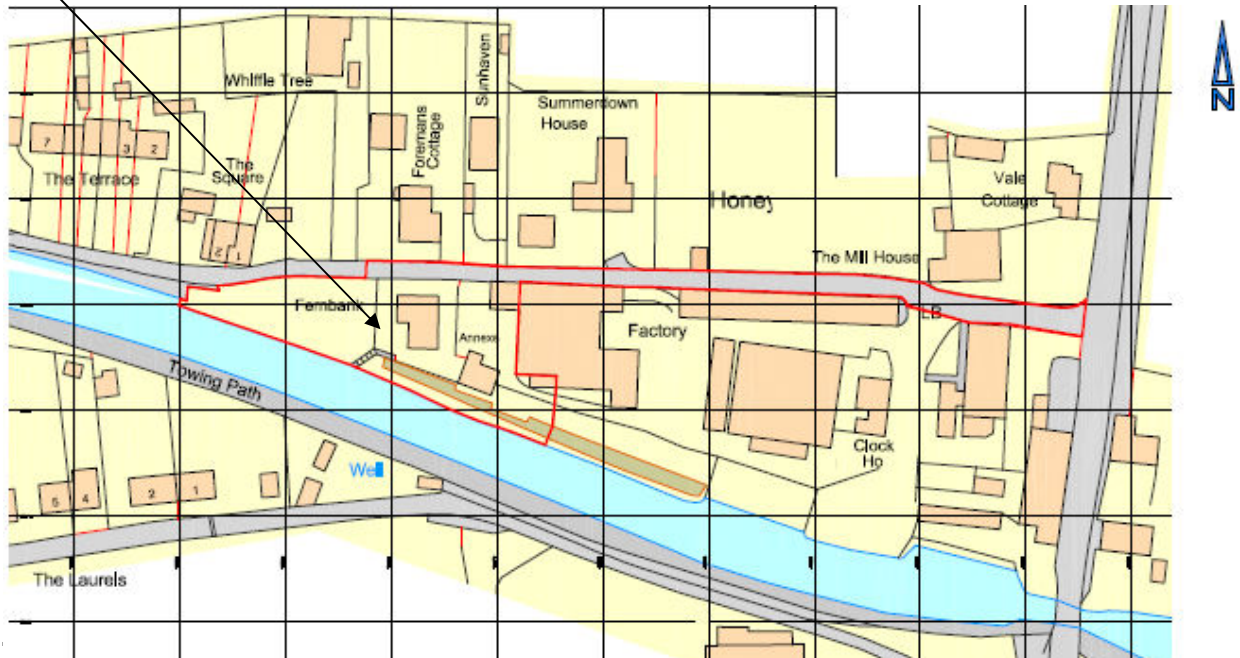
The application site lies within the settlement of Honeystreet, to the north of the Kennet and Avon Canal and to the west of the Woodborough to Lockeridge Road. The access road, known as Chimney Lane is a single narrow lane which runs parallel to the canal on the northern side and the site can be found approximately 260 metres along, immediately beyond the collection of existing former mill, warehouse / employment building.

The site is occupied by one detached bungalow and one smaller bungalow called 'Annexe' but which in planning terms is a separate lawful dwelling. The rest of the site largely comprises of a grassed triangle of land enclosed by a low timber picket fence. Visually prominent from the canal and adjacent towpath, the main part of the site is elevated from it by some 4 metres, and then slopes down towards the canal over the most southerly 10 metres of the site.

Within the adopted Kennet Local Plan, Honeystreet is defined as a 'village with limited facilities'.

It lies within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Site

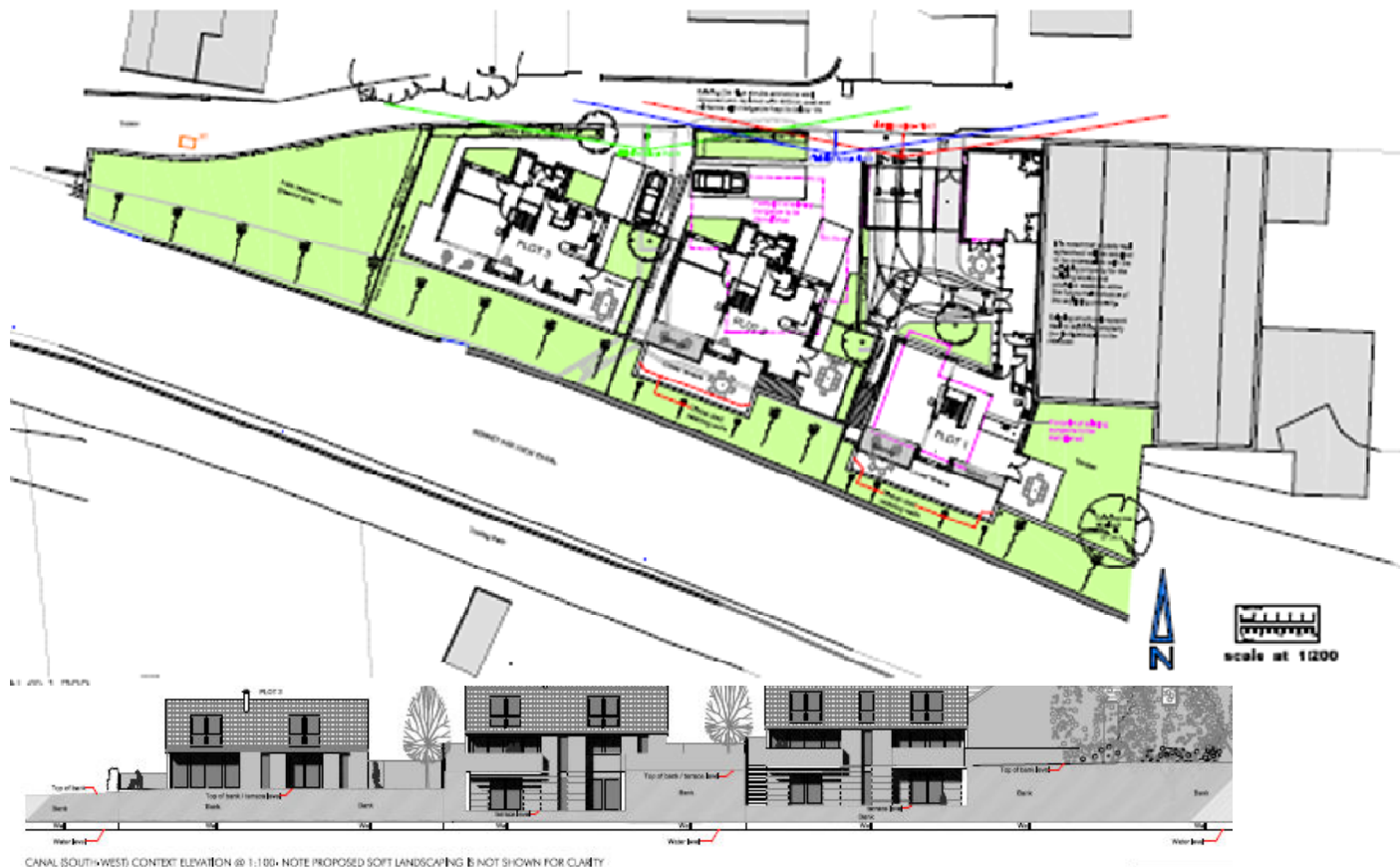


4 In respect of this site, the only site history of any relevance is K/51839/FUL, which granted permission for the change of use of the 'annexe' from ancillary accommodation to a self-contained dwelling in 2005.

Also of some relevance are decisions relating to the neighbouring factory and wharfside sites to the east of this site. Most notably these include; an historic permission to allow the neighbouring buildings (and others) to be used for B1 (light industrial/ office) and B8 (storage) uses; an appeal decision under planning reference K/52510/F relating to the redevelopment of the whole of that site for a mixed use development including 19 new dwellings; various applications that did not proceed to a decision following officer concerns; and E/10/0772/FUL, which permitted the redevelopment of 2 dwellings and former commercial buildings to the east of the site to provide 5 residential dwellings which was permitted with conditions on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

## 5. The Proposal

The application proposes the demolition of the two single storey dwellings on site and their replacement with 3 dwellings fronting the canal-side together with ancillary accommodation, car port, parking and landscaping. From the lane to the north, the dwellings would have the appearance of 1.5 storey dwellings, but due to lower levels at the canal-side, these would appear as 2 two storey dwellings, with accommodation in the roofspace above and a lower dwelling, which staircase down in height from east to west, the largest dwelling adjacent the factory.



***Proposed streetscene facing south; canal-side***



***Proposed streetscene facing north; lane frontage***

**6. Planning Policy**

The following planning policies are considered of relevance to this proposal:

The National Planning Policy Framework, with particular reference to;

Chapter 6: Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

Chapter 7: Requiring good design

Chapter 11: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Chapter 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

It is of note that sustainable development is an overarching objective which runs throughout this document.

Policies PD1, NR4, HC5, HC6, HC24, NR6 and NR7 of the adopted Kennet Local Plan 2011

The draft Wiltshire Core Strategy has not yet been formally adopted and consequently, it can only be afforded limited weight. Within this document, Core Policies 1, 2, 18, 51, 57, 58 and 60 are relevant.

## **7. Consultations**

**Parish Council** – Points are reported in full as these reflect many of the representations made by neighbours.

The Parish Council unanimously object strongly to this application on the following grounds.

1. The site, located close to the edge of the canal and at a point where the bank has been subject to subsidence in the past, is too small to support the number of dwellings proposed, especially as two of the proposed houses are large, each with 4 bedrooms.
2. We note that the 'ancillary accommodation' proposed for Plot 1 could, with the pitched roof proposed, include a first floor at a later stage and in any event might be classed as a dwelling in its own right, thus increasing the number of dwellings to four in all – with all the relevant needs for services, deliveries, car parking, and so on.
3. We have noted the issues raised by the Directors of The India Shop, whose warehouse abuts the site and up against which the dwelling on Plot 1 is proposed to be constructed. We believe that those issues of access, ownership, drainage and structural safety need to be fully resolved before any permission for development affecting the warehouse is given.
4. Access to the site and to residential properties in Chimney Lane is problematic at the present time, especially for visitors' parking and heavy vehicles. There is no provision for turning, apart from the use of private driveways, on this single track, unadopted lane. The addition of further dwellings at the western end of the lane, together with concomitant and considerably increased demand for road traffic of one kind or another, including vehicles turning, and especially during demolition and construction works, would place an unacceptable burden on those who currently use and reside on the lane. In view of these problems, we are very surprised to note that there is insufficient parking for three/four dwellings and no adequate turning space on site has been provided in this proposal. We believe that the issue of access does not meet the requirements of Kennet Local Plan saved Policy PD1, consideration B4).
5. Despite the undistinguished nature of the present dwellings on the site, for which suitable replacements would be welcomed, we think that the proposed new dwellings would not blend happily with the rural surroundings of Honeystreet. The style of the proposed new buildings



does not respect the varied use of local materials and building styles found nearby and specifically mentioned in the Honeystreet Village Design Statement (VDS) as a desirable requirement for any new dwellings in the hamlet. Our views on this would also appear to concur with a number of the considerations listed in Kennet Local Plan saved Policy PD1. The juxtapositioning of the dwelling proposed for Plot 1 alongside the attractive south façade of the adjacent 19th-century warehouse, shows a notably unhappy lack of sympathy between old and new. The proposed new dwellings would be of suburban style, cramped together and with extensive use of glass: quite out of keeping with the wooded and grassy canal banks, where nearby vernacular houses and historic industrial buildings are set well back from the waterside. The style is more suited to a marina development, such as those seen in the Cotswold Water Park or by the canal on the edge of Devizes.

6. We would welcome the demolition and rebuilding of the existing two dwellings on this site in an appropriate style and scale, respecting the demands of the VDS – in particular its recommendation that any development should be in keeping with “the scale and character of the village” - and the size and access limitations of the site. We do not consider that the site or the access to it could support more than two modest dwellings.

We very much hope that the Council will refuse this application and encourage the applicant to seek a more sympathetic re-development of the site with no more than two houses in total.

**Wiltshire Highways** – Initially raised no objection to the principle of the proposed new dwellings as these would not lead to a significant increase in likely traffic movements at the access and junction so as may warrant a refusal. However, some concerns were raised about the accessibility of the proposed parking areas and that the “middle” hedgerow showing as 2m high could be restrictive for vehicles accessing the site.

An amended plan demonstrating a tracking diagram and the achievable visibility from each of the accesses was requested from the applicant and this was provided with some slight modifications to enable the recommendations to be achieved and highway officers have subsequently raised no objections to the amended proposals.

The number of parking spaces provided accords with the Council’s parking policy requirement contained within the Local Transport Plan 3 which requires two spaces for 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings and three spaces for four bedroom dwellings.

One objector has submitted a Transport Statement in relation to both this site and the ‘Millside’ site under planning reference E/10/0772/FUL where 2 dwellings are proposed to be replaced with 5, which claims that the junction is unsuitable to cater for additional vehicular movements. This submission, and any implications for the ‘Fernbank’ site under consideration here, have been carefully re-considered by Highway Officers who have concluded that;

*‘I accept that visibility, particularly to the north, (of the junction between Chimney Lane and the Alton Barnes/ Woodborough Road) is substandard, but this has always been the case. What we are talking about here is a fairly small increase in traffic from the access. The suggested figure of 23% does not take any account of the traffic generated by the commercial uses, being based solely on the number of dwellings. In any case, the use of percentages can be very misleading (small increases over small flows can give high percentages). I have found that planning inspectors prefer to deal with actual numbers. In this case we are dealing with an additional 15, or so, vehicles exiting the site per day, an average of about 1 per hour. Given the levels of traffic on the main road, I do not consider that this small increase in exit movements will present an unacceptable highway risk.’* Highway officers have confirmed that the additional

movements generated by the modest scale of the proposed additional development would not significantly worsen the situation such that they could justify a refusal of planning permission on highway safety grounds.

Clearly any future development proposals will need to be considered on their merits and may lead to an objection on highway grounds.

**Wiltshire Council Ecologist** - No evidence of protected species have been found on site and the survey is considered adequate to consider the implications of this application. A condition is recommended that the development is carried out in accordance with the ecology report.

**Wessex Water** – No objections, separate systems of drainage will be required to serve the proposed development and no surface water connections will be permitted to the foul sewer system.

**Canal and Rivers Trust** – After due consideration of the application details, the Canal & River Trust has no objections to the proposed principle of the development, subject to the imposition of suitably worded conditions relating to landscaping, boundary treatment, the waterway wall and drainage.

However the Trust is concerned that the proposed design may not be considered appropriate in such a prominent location when viewed from the towpath and waterway. We would prefer a more traditional canal vernacular approach, particularly due to the relation of the site to the Honey Street Wharf development.

It also appears that the Canal & River Trust have the right to enter the land for the purposes of maintaining the canal bank. In order to ensure that future large scale work is not necessary on the waterway wall requiring access across the land it is suggested that the applicants be required to carry out a structural survey of the wall to establish any remedial action that may be necessary as a result of the proposal in order that this work can be incorporated into the redevelopment of the site.

**Wiltshire Council Housing** - I confirm that under the current and emerging housing policies, the proposal will not give rise to the requirement for any affordable housing contribution.

**Wiltshire Council Environmental Health** - I am writing further to the email below dated 26<sup>th</sup> November from the applicant's agent and in addition to the comments I have already given regarding this application. Since receiving the email I have visited the Fernbank site again to make a further assessment of the noise from the extraction system at the sawmills.

The sound of the extraction system at the Fernbank site is constant during the working day and has a tonal aspect to it, as it does at the Millside site. Like the Millside site the Fernbank site has a direct line of sight to the dust extractor. The Millside BS4142 assessment calculated a rating level of 21dB. The Fernbank site is approximately 20m further away than Millside, this extra distance is not likely to bring the rating level down to an acceptable level.

In my opinion the noise experienced from the sawmills dust extraction system is likely to have an unacceptable impact on amenity at the proposed dwellings. I accept that there are already dwellings on the site but these dwellings have very different frontages facing the canal. The Fernbank bungalow has a 6ft fence protecting their eastern and southern façade and very few windows facing this direction. The proposed dwellings would all have habitable rooms in an

open plan design facing the canal. The connecting living rooms and kitchens will have French doors facing on to terraces looking out over the canal. I am of the professional opinion that noise levels will result in an unacceptable detriment to amenity within these living spaces if the noise from the sawmills is not mitigated.

In the absence of a noise impact assessment relevant to this site, the agent has subsequently confirmed that the noise report/ attenuation measures proposed for the Millside site (E/10/0772/FUL) can be taken into account on this site and both the applicant and the owner of the sawmill have confirmed their willingness for a pre-occupation condition to cover the recommended attenuation works.

Ancillary accommodation for plot 1 of 13/03736/FUL

I also remain concerned about the ancillary accommodation attached to plot 1 of 13/03736/FUL which is shown in the submitted plans to share a party wall with the warehouse next door. The warehouse has B1 and B8 use. B1 or light industrial should be appropriate for mixed residential/business areas however sharing a party wall between a habitable room and unrestricted B1 use is definitely not ideal. The applicant must provide evidence to demonstrate that the materials and insulation of the party wall are sufficient to protect the amenity of this habitable room.

Odour/other noise sources.

For reasons stated in my previous comments I remain concerned about the potential for odour from the sawmills and noise from the canal use affecting the amenity of future residents. I accept that there may be an argument for there already being residential properties on some of these plots. However, the aspects of these current properties on to the canal are significantly different from the proposed and the exposure to noise and odours are therefore likely to be more significant for the proposed properties.

**AONB** – The North Wessex Downs AONB Unit have been asked to comment on this planning application by a local resident. Due to its location within the hamlet of Honeystreet and the number of houses proposed it is not something we have commented on earlier in respect of impact on the wider AONB landscape. However, having been asked to consider this proposal the AONB Unit do consider that this scheme will lead to a level of localised harm and the development therefore cannot be considered as meeting the needs of “conserving and enhancing” the character and qualities of the AONB (as required by the CRoW Act 2000).

The existing site has a modest single storey dwelling and annexe sat in a reasonable sized plot, that although not of any particular architectural quality, at least does not dominate the canal side setting. There is scope for redevelopment of this site in a sympathetic way that retains the existing character, without the level of overdevelopment and urbanising impact proposed in this current scheme for the three proposed dwellings. The AONB Unit have also been made aware of the related nearby application E/10/0772/FUL that should be considered together with the impacts from this development on the character and qualities of the nationally protected North Wessex Downs AONB.

**Wiltshire Council Archaeology** – No objection subject to archaeological watching brief condition.

**CPRE**- The CPRE wish to reinforce the objections submitted by the Alton Parish Council.

## 8. Publicity

This application has been advertised by way of a site notice, letters to neighbours and the parish council.

A total of 22 letters of objection have been received from neighbours living close to the site and raising the following points;

- The application must be considered with E/10/0772/FUL (Millside application) as cumulatively, the developments will have a major impact on this small community; both would increase the population of the hamlet by 50% and add to traffic.
- The plans represent a severe over-development with large dwellings which will totally unbalance this small hamlet which consists mostly of small cottages
- 2 of the houses would have virtually no garden despite being of a family scale.
- The design of the dwellings is most unattractive and terrible, are of a town-style and are too cramped
- The dwellings would reduce the amount of light to existing houses and front gardens of Honeystreet properties
- The proposed dwellings would adversely affect the outlook and views from existing properties.
- The dwellings appear as a continuous development, exacerbated by the addition of joining walls, resulting in a bulky appearance which result in an urban feel, incongruous with the environment
- The grain of development in plan form is out of keeping and represents an unsympathetic and inappropriate scheme
- The proposals will adversely affect public views from the towpath, canal and lane.
- Neighbours were not consulted by the applicants on the application.
- The application contains insufficient information concerning materials.
- The proposals would halve the only open green space on the south side of the lane.
- The design of the scheme is contrary to the Village Design Statement and incongruous with this 19<sup>th</sup> century hamlet which built up around the sawmill. A marina style development which would be more suited to the Cotswold Water Park is not appropriate here.
- There would be concerns over any amenity use of the western piece of open grass.
- Access is along an unsuitable narrow lane which is already frequently blocked – an increase of 6-8 vehicles will cause potential mayhem, not to mention chaos during the construction period
- 2 of the properties only have space for 2 cars [officer note; the two larger dwellings both make provision for 3 parking spaces] and the spaces and turning areas are too tight and will necessitate vehicle shuffling, making use of the lane.
- The statement by the developer that more parking than at present will be supplied is not correct.
- There are concerns over the present condition of the lane and further vehicles together with damage resulting from construction will be unlikely to be rectified
- The visibility of oncoming traffic over the canal bridge to the right (at the junction between the Woodborough- Alton Barnes Road with the access lane) is insufficient and any increase in the use of this inadequate junction would increase the risk of a serious accident.
- The lane is so narrow is already used to access a number of properties that any additional usage and potential obstruction could cause a problem for emergency access
- The sensible redevelopment of 'Fernbank' may be supported provided any replacement

scheme is sensitive to the small, cottage style local properties.

- More investigations into water voles are needed
- The submitted ecology report is insufficient to deal with potential wildlife implications.
- There are concerns that the proposed dwellings and their proximity to the banking, together with the proposed construction operations will lead to instability and further erosion of the banking.
- Areas for construction access, plant and parking are insufficient.
- The proposals would result in 3 large houses with 13 bedrooms replacing 2 small bungalows with a total of 3 bedrooms and represents gross overdevelopment
- The proposals would detract from the historic factory building which is of architectural value
- Honeystreet was adversely affected by development in the 1960's, which we should not wish to repeat.
- The proposals are completely out of keeping in terms of their scale and massing, with very limited breaks in the extent of the buildings.
- The proposed buildings are out of keeping with the grain and rhythm of development
- The design of the proposed dwellings is alien to the countryside with their large amounts of glazing and angular forms which would be incongruous with rural views.
- The proposals could compromise the neighbour's drainage, structural integrity and the proposed use is not compatible with the use of the adjacent building.

## **9. Planning Considerations**

### 9.1 Principle

The application site lies within the built up area of the village of Honeystreet, which is currently defined as a 'village with limited facilities' with the Kennet Local Plan 2011. In locations such as this, Policy HC24 permits the redevelopment of existing sites and infill development to provide new residential development within the built up area of the settlement, provided that the development does not consolidate an existing sporadic, loose knit area of development, is in harmony with the village in terms of its scale and character and accords with other policies of the Plan.

The National Planning Policy Framework is a more recent policy document which seeks to plan positively for sustainable development. This is referred to as the 'golden thread' which runs throughout. The NPPF also promotes within paragraph 47, that local planning authorities should 'boost significantly the supply of housing' and in accordance with this, the Council is currently seeking to identify additional housing sites and reviewing settlement boundaries as part of the work towards the adoption of the draft Wiltshire Core Strategy.

In considering the previous appeal on the adjacent factory/ wharfside site, the Inspector held that the previously proposed 19 units was of a disproportionate scale of development for the size of the village and that in practice, many new occupiers would be highly dependent upon the private car and hence the development of the scale proposed was not considered sustainable. Officers find no reason to disagree with this comment; the minimal facilities available within walking distance have not increased and the size of the village is small, such that a housing development of a significant size could not be deemed appropriate. The village does however, benefit from a public house, a shop/ countrystore and is home to a couple of local businesses which are all within very easy reach of the application site.

In this instance, the applicant is seeking to develop three dwellings from two bungalows – a net increase of just 1 unit. Even considered cumulatively with the recently permitted site at Millside E/10/0772/FUL, this still only represents a net increase in the number of dwellings of 4 units, significantly less than was previously refused upon appeal and is a scale of development which is commensurate with the scale of Honeystreet.

The existing pattern of development cannot be described as loose knit or sporadic, but rather more linear and regular in form, with the site being bounded by the factory buildings to the east, dwellings along the lane to the north and east and with the proposed footprints of Plots 1 & 2 overlapping much of the footprint of the existing dwellings. Consequently, the replacement of these two dwellings and the addition of a further bungalow with rooms in the roof, cannot be considered to consolidate a loose knit or sporadic form of development and it is concluded that development of this scale could be readily accommodated within the built form of the village without compromising sustainable development objectives.

The existing bungalows occupying the site are of poor architectural merit and are visually prominent when viewed from the canalside by virtue of their elevated position on the banking. They neither complement the history of the adjacent site, other vernacular buildings within Honeystreet, nor are they of pleasing design such that they positively contribute to the visual amenities of the area. As such, the site offers the opportunity for redevelopment to provide an additional dwelling.

## 9.2 Highway Issues

Many residents and the Parish Council have raised concerns about the additional vehicular movements along the existing narrow track which does not benefit from a footpath or passing places and has a substandard junction where it meets the Alton Barnes-Woodborough Road. Additionally, there is concern that the proposed units do not provide adequate parking or turning facilities for the scale of the dwellings. However, the proposed parking spaces do meet with the Council's standards as set out within adopted policy. Turning and visibility areas have been carefully considered and a slight amendment to the scheme (the setting back of the proposed linked building from the north of the site) and tracking diagrams have been provided and are considered acceptable.

It is acknowledged that these areas are tight, but nonetheless, in view of the nature of Chimney Lane which, as a previous appeal inspector confirmed, is straight and offers good visibility and whose width encourages slower driving, and the minimal additional vehicle movements, these are considered adequate such that a refusal of planning permission cannot be warranted. Highway officers have carefully examined the junction with the road, and conclude that although visibility in a northerly direction is not ideal, the additional vehicular movements would not warrant a refusal on highway safety grounds.

## 9.3 Visual amenity, impact on the character and quality of the AONB

The village of Honeystreet is made up of a wide variety of buildings, from modest terraced cottages, to larger more modern detached dwellings, including some bungalows but primarily two storey development, and larger scale former and existing commercial buildings around which the development of Honeystreet formed. Some of these are constructed from stone, others render, some historic brick and some more modern brick. Some under traditional clay pantiled roofs and others utilising slate brought in from the adjacent canal whilst many of the

more modern dwellings are constructed from concrete tiles.

Consequently, the architectural language of the settlement is very mixed and a pastiche development which seeks to replicate more traditional properties in the area, may not be especially appropriate. The application site is seen within the context of the factory building next door, and the proposed designs seek to respond to its scale in the streetscene whilst 'stepping down' to also appear fitting adjacent the existing grassed area which offers a more open and low rise aspect.

Some residents and consultees have expressed concern about the design and massing of the dwellings which will undoubtedly have a different appearance than the lower key nature of the existing bungalows on site. From Chimney Lane, the proposed dwellings would have the appearance of large bungalows, of a more modern appearance. The massing of the proposed buildings is however, broken up through the setting back of the properties in a 'stepped' manner from Chimney Lane and although of a more substantial built form, in this context, it is considered that the buildings would not appear over dominant.

From the canal, the buildings would step down to take advantage of their canalside position and would appear as 2 two-storey dwellings and a bungalow, each with rooms in the roof. In the context of houses beyond and the adjacent factory, it is considered that subject to careful control over materials, detailing and landscaping, the proposed dwellings would assimilate with their surroundings and would add interest and architectural merit to an area of poor quality.

The proposed designs are of a contemporary style utilising a simple form to enable the historic factory buildings to be read whilst complementing the architectural language through use of high quality materials to reflect the vernacular brick and slate to reinforce the local vernacular. Design is a subjective matter and contemporary design frequently polarises opinion, however the NPPF makes it clear in paragraph 60 that

*'Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.'*

Whilst the concern over large modern marina developments which do not respond to their local context, expressed within the Village Design Statement and within representations can be understood, this is a relatively modest development of a high quality albeit contemporary design. It is clear to officers that the architect has given careful thought to the site's surroundings and responded to this. Consequently, it is not considered that the proposal would be harmful to the visual amenities of the area, setting of the adjacent canal or wider AONB landscape such that a refusal of planning permission could be warranted on this basis.

#### 9.4 Residential amenity

The proposed dwellings are of a scale and are sufficiently distant from neighbouring properties to the north, such that light to their gardens or properties would not be significantly affected. First floor windows facing northwards offer the potential for some views towards the neighbouring properties to the north, however, in view of their aspect, positioning and intervening distance, these would not result in any significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.

The proposed dwellings each have modest usable gardens/ terraces, however these each accord with the Council's minimum amenity standards of 50 square metres and in view of the canalside setting, this is considered adequate, subject to the removal of permitted development rights in the event that Members are minded to grant planning permission.

The proposed dwellings also offer the potential for a degree of mutual overlooking from side facing windows and balconies and in view of their close positioning and limited amenity spaces, a condition is recommended to help guard against overlooking / privacy issues.

Environmental Health officers have in particular, raised concern about noise from the sawmill opposite and also the potential for conflict between the use of the annexe and link proposed to the north of Plot 1 and the adjacent factory. Conditions to cover attenuation works to the sawmill extract and insulation of the wall adjacent the factory from noise are recommended to cover these matters.

#### 9.5 Other issues of concern

Many of the other matters of concern raised by residents have either been addressed by consultee responses or can be dealt with by means of the recommended planning conditions. Examples include the concern over the stability of the canal banking, external lighting, the impact on ecology, landscaping, materials, landscaping and archaeology. Other matters, such as ownership issues, including concerns over drainage / stability of neighbouring building are civil matters to be resolved between the parties or would be covered by separate legislation such as The Party Wall Act 1996.

#### **10. Conclusion**

The proposed replacement of two dwellings with three accords in principle with current planning policy. Matters of highway concern have been carefully considered but the proposed development would not be detrimental to highway safety. The scale and design of the proposed buildings is contentious, being larger in than the existing buildings on site and of a more contemporary design. However, officers consider that provided the design details are carefully controlled, the proposed dwellings are of a scale and form which respond to the grain of development in the area and could complement the wide variety of existing designs in Honeystreet, whilst responding to the local vernacular and adjacent commercial and domestic buildings. Consequently, it is considered that the proposals would not harm the visual amenities of the area, adjacent undesignated heritage assets (of the canal and factory site) nor undermine the objectives of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the proposals would preserve reasonable standards of residential amenity. Approval of planning permission with conditions is therefore recommended.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That planning permission be granted with the following conditions;

- 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 Notwithstanding the details contained within the letter from Ian Sharland dated 22nd August 2013, no dwelling hereby approved shall be first occupied until works to attenuate the noise levels of the dust extraction system at the adjacent Honeystreet Sawmill, have either

1) been carried out in complete accordance with the recommendations a) - d) inclusive set out on page 3 of the letter from Ian Sharland dated 22nd August 2013 , unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfactory of the local planning authority that following implementation of measures a) and b) measures c) and d) are not necessary, or

2) have been implemented in accordance an alternative scheme of noise attenuation, the details of which have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

REASON: To attenuate noise from the dust extraction system which would be harmful to the amenities of the occupiers of the new development.

- 3 No development shall commence on site until details and samples of the materials to be used for the external walls and roofs have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

- 4 No development shall commence on site until details of all eaves, verges, windows (including external finishes, head, sill and window reveal details), doors (including Juliette balconies), rainwater goods, flues and chimneys, balconies (including balustrading) and privacy louvers have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

- 5 No development shall commence on site until a scheme of hard and soft landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the details of which shall include :-

- a) a detailed planting specification showing all plant species, supply and planting sizes and planting densities;
- b) finished levels and contours;
- c) means of enclosure;
- d) all hard and soft surfacing materials;
- e) minor artefacts and structures (e.g. refuse storage units and oil / septic tanks and including details of any external lighting);

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development, to

preserve bat foraging routes and in the interests of the protection of existing important features.

- 6 All soft landscaping comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the first occupation of the building(s) or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner; All shrubs, trees and hedge planting shall be maintained free from weeds and shall be protected from damage by vermin and stock. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years, die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. All hard landscaping shall also be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and the protection of existing important landscape features.

- 7 No part of the development hereby approved shall be first occupied until the parking area shown on the approved plans has been consolidated, surfaced and laid out in accordance with the approved details. This area shall be maintained and remain available for this use at all times thereafter.

REASON: To ensure that adequate provision is made for parking within the site in the interests of highway safety.

- 8 No part of the development shall be first occupied, until the three visibility splays shown on the approved plan SITE 1, 1433-P1.dwg Rev C received on the 25th October 2013 have been provided with no obstruction to visibility at or above a height of 1 metre above the nearside carriageway level. These areas shall be maintained free of obstructions to sight at all times thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety

- 9 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No.2) (England) Order 2008 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting or amending that Order with or without modification), there shall be no additions/extensions or external alterations to any building forming part of the development hereby permitted.

REASON: In the interests of the amenity of the area and to enable the Local Planning Authority to consider individually whether planning permission should be granted for additions/extensions or external alterations.

- 10 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No.2) (England) Order 2008 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting or amending that Order with or without modification), no buildings or structures, or gate, wall, fence or other means of

enclosure, other than those shown on the approved plans or approved under the provisions of the above conditions, shall be erected or placed anywhere on the site on the approved plans.

REASON: To safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

- 11 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No.2) (England) Order 2008 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting or amending that Order with or without modification), no windows, doors or other form of openings other than those shown on the approved plans, shall be inserted above ground floor ceiling level in the northern elevations of plots 3 and 4 the development hereby permitted.

REASON: In the interests of residential amenity and privacy.

- 12 No development shall commence until details as to how privacy of the 'garden' areas to the east of Plots 2 & 3 shall be preserved from views obtained from the north west facing windows at ground and first floor level and from balconies to the south west of Plots 1 and 2 respectively, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This may necessitate a combination of obscured and fixed glazing/ privacy screens and privacy louvers (as indicated to the first floor gable elevations). Details of the privacy louvers to the southeast gable elevation windows of Plots 2 and 3 shall also be submitted to the local planning authority for approval. Works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of Plots 2 or 3 and shall be permanently maintained as such thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of residential amenity and privacy.

- 13 No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until an investigation is undertaken to the satisfaction of the local planning authority in conjunction with the Environment Agency to determine the nature and extent of contamination. In the event that contamination of the site is confirmed the developer shall liaise with the Environment Agency on measures to protect surface water and ground water interests.

The investigation shall include the following stages:

-A desk study which should include the identification of previous site uses, potential contaminants that might reasonably be expected given those uses and other relevant information.

If the potential for significant ground contamination is confirmed, the information should be used to produce:

-A detailed water interest survey to identify all wells, boreholes, springs and watercourses within 250m of the site boundary

-A diagrammatical representation (conceptual model) for the site of all potential contaminant sources, pathways and receptors.

-A site investigation, designed for the site, using the information and any

diagrammatical representations (conceptual model) undertaken. The investigation must be comprehensive enough to enable a suitable risk assessment to be undertaken relating to groundwater and surface waters associated on and off the site that may be affected, refinement of the conceptual model, and development of a Method Statement detailing the remediation requirement.

Reference should also be made to the Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination CLR11 Report.

REASON: To ensure that land contamination can be dealt with adequately prior to the use of the site hereby approved by the Local Planning Authority.

- 14 No development shall commence on site until a scheme for the discharge of surface water from the site (including surface water from the driveways, paved areas and roofs), incorporating sustainable drainage details, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be first occupied until surface water drainage has been constructed in accordance with the approved scheme.

REASON: To ensure that the development can be adequately drained.

- 15 **INFORMATIVE TO APPLICANT:**  
The applicant/developer is advised to contact Richard Leigh, Third Party Works Engineer on 01380 722859 in order to ensure that any necessary consents are obtained and that the works comply with the Canal & River Trusts' Code of Practice for Works affecting the Trust".

The applicant is advised that an agreement with the Canal & River Trust would be required for the discharge of water into the canal.

- 16 No development shall commence on site until details of the works for the disposal of sewerage including the point of connection to the existing public sewer have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No dwelling shall be first occupied until the approved sewerage details have been fully implemented in accordance with the approved plans.

REASON: To ensure that the proposal is provided with a satisfactory means of drainage and does not increase the risk of flooding or pose a risk to public health or the environment.

- 17 The development hereby approved shall be carried out in strict accordance with the recommendations given at Section 6 of the Phase I Protected Species Survey Report by Malford Environmental Consulting dated September 2013

REASON: To mitigate against potential harm to biodiversity and nature habitats.

- 18 The use of the link and additional building to the north of the dwelling known as 'Plot 1' shall be restricted to non-habitable purposes unless the details of the means of insulating this building from the adjacent warehouse are first submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and the approved noise

insulation measures are installed in accordance with the approved details. Whether or not such details are approved, the use of this building and its link to Plot 1, shall remain ancillary to the residential use of Plot 1 only and for the avoidance of any doubt, shall not be occupied as a separate planning unit.

REASON: The additional accommodation is sited in a position where the Local Planning Authority, having regard to the reasonable standards of residential amenity, access, and planning policies pertaining to the area, would not permit a wholly separate dwelling. Furthermore, the local planning authority has concerns that without satisfactory means of insulating these buildings from noise, standards of amenity could be significantly compromised by the adjacent use.

- 19 No development shall commence until a detailed report of the canal wall and banking carried out by a suitably qualified person has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The report shall include a survey as to the condition of the existing canal wall and banking and any structural implications the development may have including recommended works and timings to ensure the stability and integrity of the waterway. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and recommendations.

REASON: To ensure that the proposed development does not adversely impact on the structural stability of the waterway.

- 20 No development shall commence within the red line site area until:

a) A written programme of archaeological investigation, which should include on-site work and off-site work such as the analysis, publishing and archiving of the results, has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority; and

b) The approved programme of archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To enable the recording of any matters of archaeological interest.

- 21 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Site Location Plan 1433-LOC1.dwg received on the 2nd September 2013

14433-P1.dwg received on the 25th October 2013

BDS-16-07-13 received on the 2nd September 2013

PLOT 1 1433-P1.dwg Rev B received on the 25th October 2013

PLOT 2 1433-P1.dwg Rev A received on the 2nd September 2013

PLOT 3 1433-P1.dwg Rev A received on the 2nd September 2013

Acoustic Report by Ian Sharland Ltd dated 15th February 2013 and Additional Letter from Ian Sharland Ltd dated 22nd August 2013 submitted in respect of application E/10/0772/FUL but agreed to be included for consideration as part of this application.

Phase I Protected Species Survey Report by Malford Environmental Consulting dated September 2013.

Application Forms and Planning Supporting Statement all received on the 2nd September 2013.

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

22 INFORMATIVE TO APPLICANT:

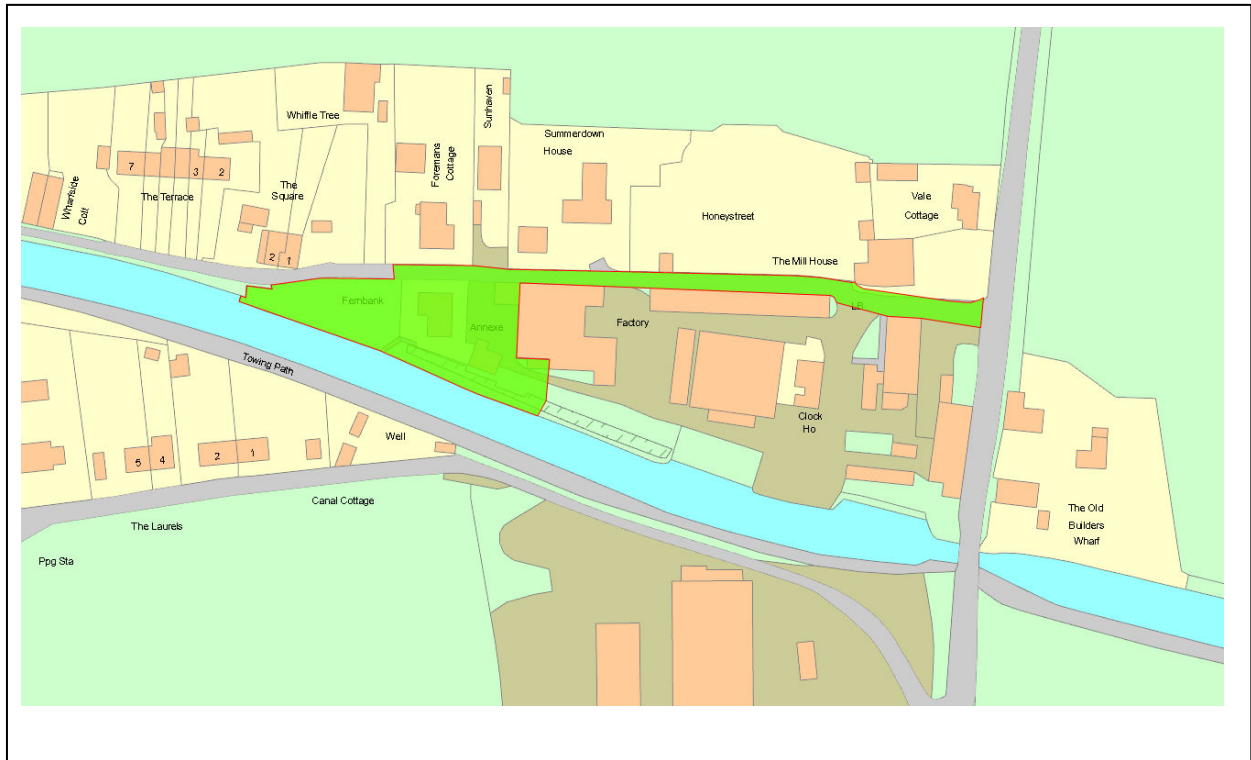
The applicant is requested to note that this permission does not affect any private property rights and therefore does not authorise the carrying out of any work on land outside their control. If such works are required it will be necessary for the applicant to obtain the landowners consent before such works commence.

If you intend carrying out works in the vicinity of the site boundary, you are also advised that it may be expedient to seek your own advice with regard to the requirements of the Party Wall Act 1996.

**REPORT TO THE AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**Report No. 1**

<b>Application Number</b>	13/03736/FUL
<b>Site Address</b>	Fernbank, Chimney Lane, Honeystreet, Pewsey, Wiltshire, Sn9 5PS
<b>Proposal</b>	Demolition of two dwellings and the erection of three dwellings and associated works.
<b>Case Officer</b>	Rachel Yeomans



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**REPORT TO THE EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**Report No. 2**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> April 2014
<b>Application Number</b>	13/07057/FUL
<b>Site Address</b>	Homesteads Rivar Road Shalbourne Marlborough SN8 3QE
<b>Proposal</b>	Single storey extension and replacement garage
<b>Applicant</b>	Mr Phillip Newton
<b>Town/Parish Council</b>	SHALBOURNE
<b>Ward</b>	BURBAGE AND THE BEDWYNS
<b>Grid Ref</b>	431581 162515
<b>Type of application</b>	Full Planning
<b>Case Officer</b>	Ruaridh O'Donoghue

**Reason for the application being considered by Committee:**

In light of officers concerns, this application is brought to committee at the request of Divisional Member, Cllr Wheeler to consider the following matters:

The Visual Impact upon the Surrounding Area  
 The Relationship to Adjoining Properties  
 The Design, Bulk, Height and General Appearance; and  
 In recognition that the proposals have been revised following the previous refusal, and are now deemed acceptable.

**1. Purpose of Report**

To consider the recommendation that the application be refused.

**2. Report Summary**

The key issues for consideration are considered to be:

- a) Whether the proposal would preserve the character and setting of the listed building;
- b) Whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Shalbourne Conservation Area.

Given the nature of the site and the relationship the property has with neighbouring dwellings it is not considered that there are any other planning issues that need to be addressed in this report.

**3. Site Description**

The Homestead is a grade II listed building situated on Rivar Road in the southern part of the village of Shalbourne. It is located within the built-up area in the Shalbourne Conservation

Area. The site and its surroundings are also located within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The listing description states: *Cottage. C17 Timber framed, rendered externally and thatched roof. Single storey and attic. Two bays with gable stacks, gable to road, and extended by further bay to left. Timber door, leaded glazing to timber windows. Roof half hipped to right, hipped over left extension and swept over 1 dormer. Interior has timber framed partitions. Chamfered spine beam. Fire lintel with small ogee stops.*

Below is a location map with photographs that show the context of the site.





South East Elevation



South West Elevation



South East Elevation



Original Dwellinghouse



Existing Garage



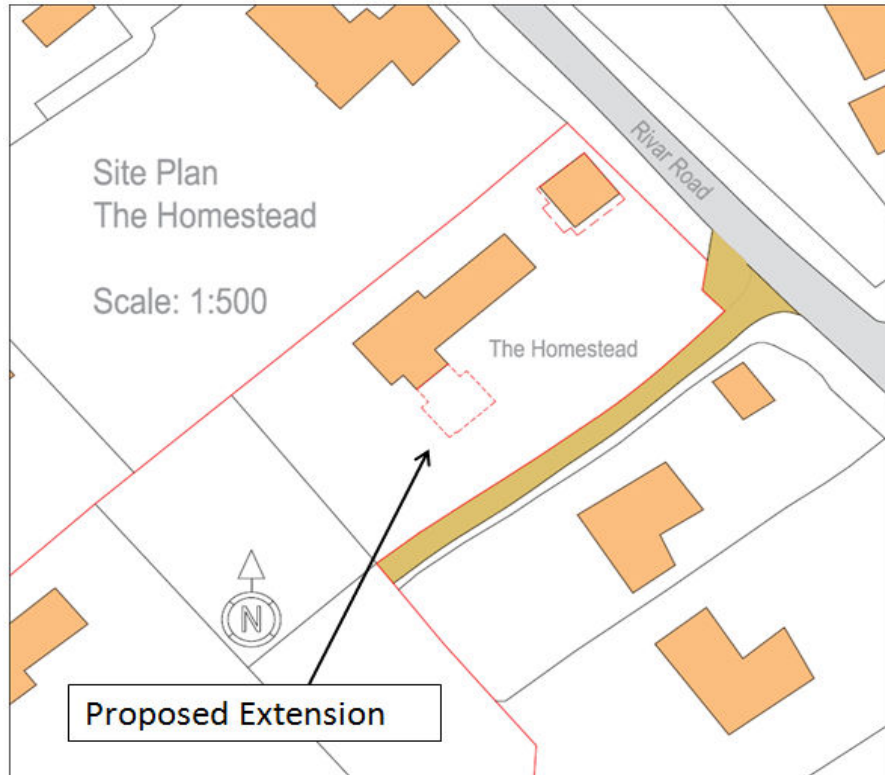
Existing Garage from Road

#### 4. Planning History

K/36845/L	Extension to existing cottage	Approved
K/36846	Extension to existing cottage	Approved
K/36884	Replacement garage	Approved
E/2012/1471/LBC	Single storey extension and garage conversion	Withdrawn
E/2012/1469/FUL	Single storey extension and garage conversion	Withdrawn
13/00054/FUL	Single storey extension and garage conversion	Refused
13/00067/LBC	Single storey extension and garage conversion	Refused

## 5. The Proposal

This application proposes the erection of a single storey extension and the conversion of the existing garage. Plans of the development are shown below.



ations



Existing South West Elevation  
(facing away from road)



Proposed South West Elevation  
(facing away from road)

levations

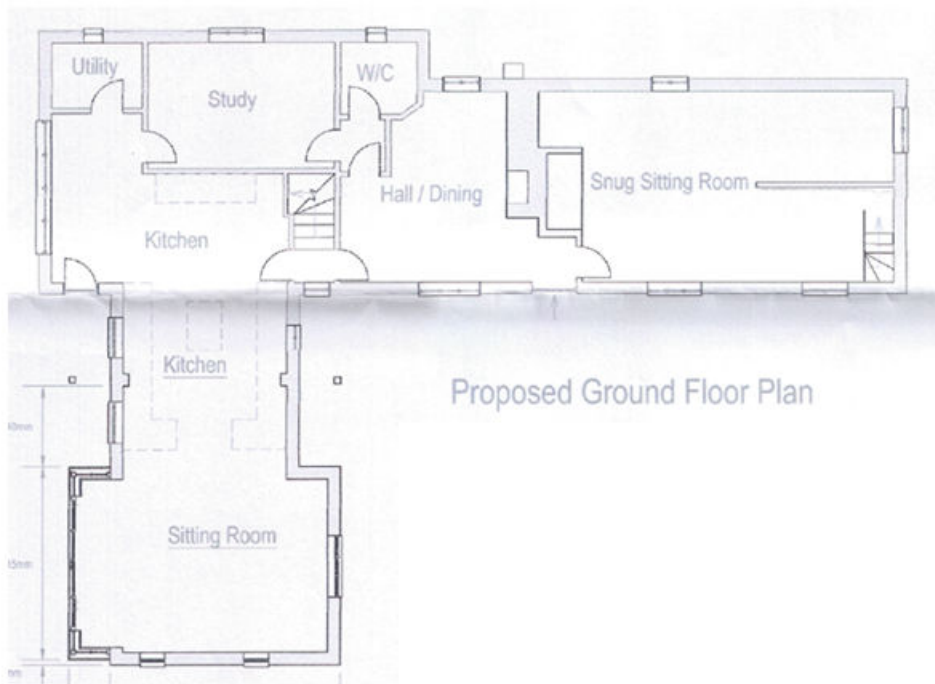


Existing North East Elevation  
(facing towards road)



Proposed North East Elevation  
(facing towards road)





## 6. Planning Policy

Kennet Local Plan 2011 – Policy PD1 (general development principles).

The statutory duty placed on the Council under The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

The duty placed on the Council under S72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Relevant policies within the National Planning Policy Framework and guidance contained within the saved Planning Policy Statement 5 Practice Guide.

The Shalbourne Conservation Area Statement provides additional guidance.

The Emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy – CP57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping; and CP58 – Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment.

## 7. Consultations

Shalbourne Parish Council – Strongly supports this application which will increase the attractiveness of the building as a family house. The listing has been irrelevant since the changes undertaken by the previous owners and approved by the former Kennet District Council. It is now difficult to discern the older “listed” part of the building. The proposed extension and replacement garage will not detract from the local scene.

Wiltshire Council Conservation Officer – Reports having met with the applicants agent on site to fully assess the proposals on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2014 and being aware of the planning history for the site, where previous applications were either withdrawn or resulted in a refusal (at committee level supporting officer recommendation). It is further noted that the former conservation officer involved with applications 13/00054/FUL and 13/00067/LBC provided the following commentary:

*“The conservation considerations are the impact on the listed building and its setting and the impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The extension will be located on a modern addition to the historic cottage and therefore there are no issues relating to the alteration of historic fabric. However, the issues are the scale and positioning of the extension and the impact that further extension has on the special interest of the listed building. Although the extension is a continuation of the existing gabled front wing to the modern extension, this extension is significant and brings the wing out to form an L shaped plan to the house. This is at odds with the linear nature of the historic building and the modern extension attached to it. The increase in extension also diminishes the significance of the historic, thatched cottage, which is detrimental to its special interest.*

*Whilst a small increase in scale of the existing modern garage building does not seem objectionable, that proposed is awkwardly designed (for example, with a concealed flat roof section) and I cannot be convinced that this is appropriate (particularly where the garage is in close visual context with the listed building and also where it is visible from outside the site). However, the overall change may be seen as a relatively minimal alteration to the building, where materials and general form are not significantly different from the existing situation.”*

It is appreciated that the current application have been amended to try and overcome the previous refusal reason, but unfortunately, they are not significant enough to overcome the concerns previously raised and the scale of the proposals remains virtually unaltered.

Sometimes there are listed buildings that really are limited in the changes or extensions that they are able to withstand without impacting upon their significance as a designated heritage asset. It is submitted that the extensions which have already been already allowed (and implemented) really are the maximum degree of extension that this building can withstand. Further extension(s) could act as a significant, further addition that would transform the building into something far removed from its humble vernacular origins. The degree and addition of further extensions is likely to have a harmful impact on the special interest of the listed building and therefore, the application should be refused.

Replacement garage:

There are no concerns over the principle of replacing the existing garage structure with something similar, but some concern is raised over the proposed roof design. The presence of dormers within the roof give a rather top-heavy appearance to it, making it visually

dominant in contrast to the cleaner, more subservient appearance of the thatched roof of the cottage. Replacing the dormers with flush rooflights would reduce the prominence of the garage and improve its stylistic relationship with the listed cottage.

## **8. Publicity**

The application has been advertised by way of a site notice, press advert and consultations with the neighbours. No third party representations were received.

## **9. Planning Considerations**

### 9.1 Garage conversion

As part of the application it is proposed to replace the existing garage with a new detached garage with ancillary living accommodation above. Under previous schemes it was proposed to convert the existing garage to achieve this and this was never objected to by the Council. The current design is for a larger garage with the introduction of dormer windows giving a top-heavy appearance. This would increase the prominence of the garage in relation to the listed building. The Council considers that the use of roof lights would be more appropriate in order to reduce the impact it has on the setting of the listed building and to reduce the harm caused to the heritage asset. Officers however submit that it is the proposed extension where the most harm would be caused.

### 9.2 Impact upon the listed building – Extension

The local planning authority has a duty placed upon it to protect the character and setting of the listed building and any features of architectural or historical interest that it may possess. In this case, the extension would be attached to a modern addition to the historic cottage and therefore there is no issue with the proposal impacting upon any historic fabric. As such, the material consideration is the impact upon the character and setting of Homesteads; and in particular, the scale of the extension, its positioning on the building and the cumulative impact with previous extensions.

Paragraph 178 of PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide states that the main considerations for additions and alterations to heritage assets are:

*“...proportion, height, massing, bulk, use of materials, use, relationship with adjacent assets, alignment and treatment of setting. Replicating a particular style may be less important, though there are circumstances when it may be appropriate. It would not normally be acceptable for new work to dominate the original asset or its setting in either scale, material or as a result of its siting. Assessment of an asset’s significance and its relationship to its setting will usually suggest the forms of extension that might be appropriate.”*

The Shalbourne Conservation Area Statement reflects the above advice, stating that *“all extensions should be in scale and character with the building to which they are added and should not dominate”*.

It is clear from the above that scale is a particularly important aspect to consider and that any new proposal to extend a listed building should not, as a result of its size, dominate the original asset or its setting. Paragraph 120 of the guidance goes on to state that: *“when assessing any application for development within the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change...”*. In this case, the special interest of the building lies within the original, historic thatched cottage and therefore it is considered important that the significance of this building is not diminished by further large extensions to the building.



It is instructive to compare the current proposed extension with the earlier one that was considered to be unacceptable. The fact is that both are very similar. The refused proposal was of exactly the same height as now proposed and the length is only 49 cm shorter than the 7.21 metres that was refused, whilst the width of the extension has actually increased to 6.5 metres from the 5.975 metres in the refused application. In short, the reasons for refusal of the last application considered by the committee have not been addressed and the same issue still exists - the proposal is considered to be of such a scale – in terms of its 6.7m length, 6.5m width, 5.6m height and 1½ storey massing - that it would dominate the original building to the detriment of its character and setting. The cumulative impact with previous extensions is particularly harmful. This goes directly against government guidance and Conservation Area Statement advice.

Furthermore, the proposed extension would deviate from the established plan form of the original dwellinghouse. Government guidance contained within the PPS5 Practical Guide states in Paragraph 182 that: *“the plan form of a building is frequently one of its most important characteristics”*. The deviation from this would harm the special interest of the listed building by confusing and obscuring its historic plan form and creating an addition that would be at odds with the original dwelling. Indeed, officers duly assert that it is one of the few surviving properties in Shalbourne that has maintained its linear form with a gable end that fronts onto the road.

The NPPF makes a distinction between proposals which cause ‘substantial harm’ to a designated heritage asset and those which lead to ‘less than substantial harm’. The former category is reserved for situations such as the complete demolition of a listed building whereas the latter is more applicable in cases such as this. However it is important to stress that the latter does not automatically mean that less than substantial harm is more acceptable, it simply means that a different test is applied. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that *“where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use”*.

The current proposal would not give rise to any public benefits. The extension is not required to secure the long term viability of the building as it already functions as a dwelling and has a perfectly workable internal layout. Accordingly, officers duly submit that the harm cannot be justified in policy terms.

### 9.3 Impact upon conservation area – Extension

The existing listed building is an important element of the conservation area and contributes towards its character and appearance and significance as a heritage asset. The extension of the cottage in the manner being proposed would harm the character and setting of the listed building and lessen its contribution to the conservation area. As such, it would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area which is the statutory test to be applied in this case.

## **10. Conclusion**

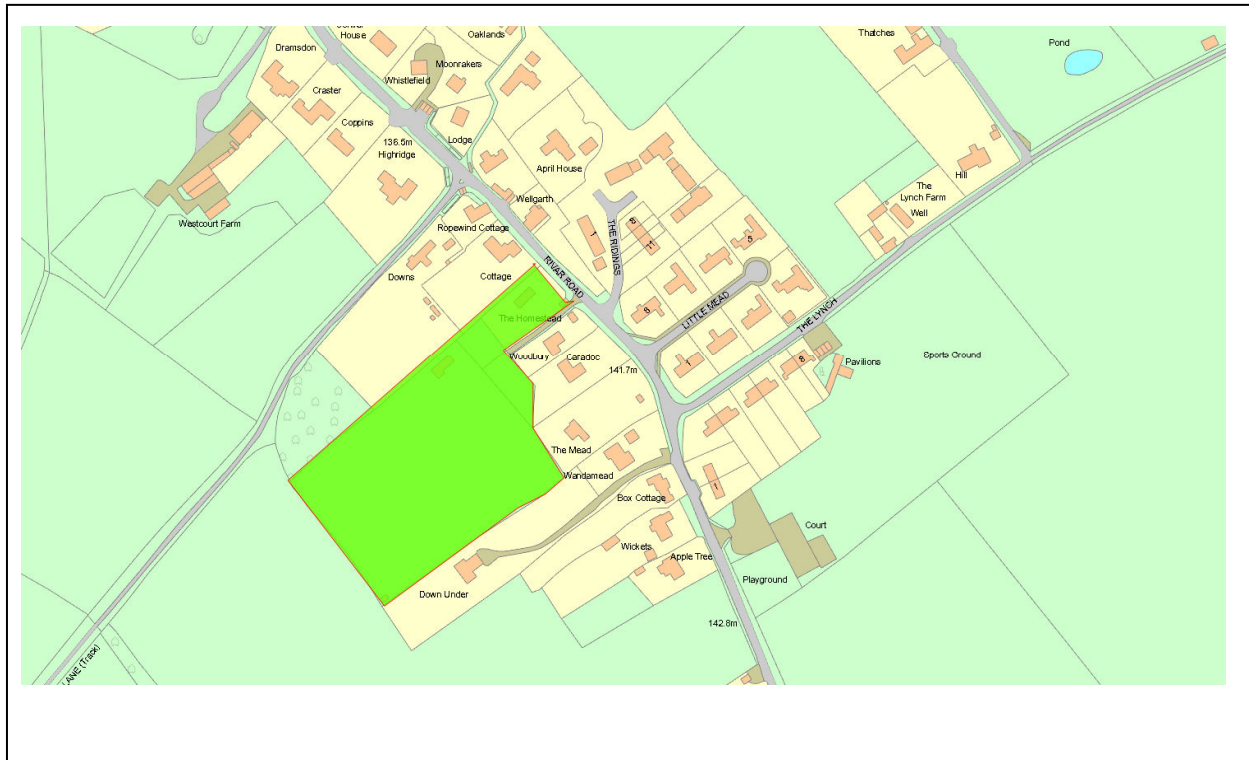
The scale of the proposed extension in relation to the original dwelling and the deviation away from the established plan form would harm the character and setting of the listed building and diminish its significance as a designated heritage asset. The proposal is little different from that refused by the committee last year and has signally failed to address the reasons for refusal. No appeal against the original refusal has been submitted. As before, the extension would also fail to preserve the character or appearance of the conservation area. As such, the proposal is contrary to government policy contained within Section 12 of the NPPF and policy PD1 of the adopted Kennet Local Plan 2011.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That planning permission be **REFUSED** for the following reason:

The scale of the proposed extension in relation to the original dwelling and the deviation away from the established plan form would harm the character and setting of the listed building and diminish its significance as a designated heritage asset. The extension would also fail to preserve the character or appearance of the conservation area. As such, the proposal is contrary to government policy contained within Section 12 of the NPPF, guidance contained in the PPS5 Practice Guide, policy PD1 of the adopted Kennet Local Plan 2011 and supplementary planning guidance contained in the Shalbourne Conservation Area Statement.

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<b>Application Number</b>	13/07057/FUL & 13/07058/LBC
<b>Site Address</b>	Homesteads Rivar Road Shalbourne Marlborough SN8 3QE
<b>Proposal</b>	Single storey extension and replacement garage(LBC is only for the single storey extension)
<b>Case Officer</b>	Ruaridh O'Donoghue



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**REPORT TO THE EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**Report No. 3**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> April 2014
<b>Application Number</b>	13/07058/LBC
<b>Site Address</b>	Homesteads Rivar Road Shalbourne Marlborough SN8 3QE
<b>Proposal</b>	Single storey extension
<b>Applicant</b>	Mr Phillip Newton
<b>Town/Parish Council</b>	SHALBOURNE
<b>Ward</b>	BURBAGE AND THE BEDWYNS
<b>Grid Ref</b>	431555 162562
<b>Type of application</b>	Full Planning
<b>Case Officer</b>	Ruaridh O'Donoghue

**Background**

This is the counterpart application to 14/07057/FUL which appears earlier on this agenda. The application seeks listed building consent for a single storey extension.

**Reason for the application being considered by Committee:**

This application is brought to committee at the request of Divisional Member, Cllr Wheeler.

**1. Purpose of Report**

To consider the recommendation that the application be refused listed building consent.

**2. Report Summary**

It is considered that the key issues for consideration are:

- Whether the proposed extension would preserve the character and setting of the listed building.

**3. Site Description**

As previously reported under 14/07057/FUL

**4. Planning History**

As previously reported under 14/07057/FUL

**5. The Proposal**

The application proposes the erection of a single storey extension. Plans of the development are included in the earlier report on the planning application.

## 6. Planning Policy

The duty placed on the Council under The Listed Buildings Act to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Relevant policies within Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework and guidance contained within the saved Planning Policy Statement 5 Practice Guide.

The Shalbourne Conservation Area Statement provides additional guidance.

The Emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy – CP57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping; and CP58 – Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment.

## 7. Consultations

Shalbourne Parish Council - Strongly supports this application which will increase the attractiveness of the building as a family house. The listing has been irrelevant since the changes undertaken by the previous owners and approved by the former Kennet District Council. It is now difficult to discern the older “listed” part of the building. The proposed extension and replacement garage will not detract from the local scene.

Wiltshire Council Conservation Officer Reports having met with the applicants agent on site to fully assess the proposals on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2014n and being aware of the planning history for the site, where previous applications were either withdrawn or resulted in a refusal (at committee level supporting officer recommendation). It is further noted that the former conservation officer involved with applications 13/00054/FUL and 13/00067/LBC provided the following commentary:

*“The conservation considerations are the impact on the listed building and its setting and the impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The extension will be located on a modern addition to the historic cottage and therefore there are no issues relating to the alteration of historic fabric. However, the issues are the scale and positioning of the extension and the impact that further extension has on the special interest of the listed building. Although the extension is a continuation of the existing gabled front wing to the modern extension, this extension is significant and brings the wing out to form an L shaped plan to the house. This is at odds with the linear nature of the historic building and the modern extension attached to it. The increase in extension also diminishes the significance of the historic, thatched cottage, which is detrimental to its special interest.*”

*Whilst a small increase in scale of the existing modern garage building does not seem objectionable, that proposed is awkwardly designed (for example, with a concealed flat roof section) and I cannot be convinced that this is appropriate (particularly where the garage is in close visual context with the listed building and also where it is visible from outside the site). However, the overall change may be seen as a relatively minimal alteration to the building, where materials and general form are not significantly different from the existing situation.”*

It is appreciated that the current applications have been amended to try and overcome the previous refusal reason, but unfortunately, they are not significant enough to overcome the concerns previously raised and the scale of the proposals remains virtually unaltered.

Sometimes there are listed buildings that really are limited in the changes or extensions that they are able to withstand without impacting upon their significance as a designated heritage

asset. It is submitted that the extensions which have already been already allowed (and implemented) really are the maximum degree of extension that this building can withstand. Further extension(s) could act as a significant, further addition that would transform the building into something far removed from its humble vernacular origins. The degree and addition of further extensions is likely to have a harmful impact on the special interest of the listed building and therefore, the application should be refused.

## **8. Publicity**

The application has been advertised by way of a site notice and press advertisement. No third party representations were received

## **9. Planning Considerations**

The listed building considerations are identical to those set out in the report for the accompanying planning application. The assessment is reproduced below:

The local planning authority has a duty placed upon it to protect the character and setting of the listed building and any features of architectural or historical interest that it may possess.

In this case, the extension will be attached to the modern addition to the historic cottage and therefore there is no issue with the proposal impacting upon any historic fabric. As such, the material consideration is the impact upon the character and setting of Homesteads and in particular the scale of the extension, its positioning on the building and the cumulative impact with previous extensions.

Paragraph 178 of PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide states that the main considerations for additions and alterations to heritage assets are:

*“...proportion, height, massing, bulk, use of materials, use, relationship with adjacent assets, alignment and treatment of setting. Replicating a particular style may be less important, though there are circumstances when it may be appropriate. It would not normally be acceptable for new work to dominate the original asset or its setting in either scale, material or as a result of its siting. Assessment of an asset’s significance and its relationship to its setting will usually suggest the forms of extension that might be appropriate.”*

The Shalbourne Conservation Area Statement reflects the above advice, stating that *“all extensions should be in scale and character with the building to which they are added and should not dominate”*.

It is clear from the above that scale is a particularly important aspect to consider and that any new proposal to extend a listed building should not, as a result of its size, dominate the original asset or its setting. Paragraph 120 of the guidance goes on to state that: *“when assessing any application for development within the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change...”*. In this case, the special interest of the building lies within the original, historic thatched cottage and therefore it is considered important that the significance of this building is not diminished by further large extensions to the building.

It is instructive to compare the current proposed extension with the earlier one that was considered to be unacceptable. The fact is that both are very similar. The refused proposal was of exactly the same height as now proposed and the length is only 49 cm shorter than the 7.21 metres that was refused, whilst the width of the extension has actually increased to 6.5 metres from the 5.975 metres in the refused application. In short, the reasons for



refusal of the last application considered by the committee have not been addressed and the same issue still exists - the proposal is considered to be of such a scale – in terms of its 6.7m length, 6.5m width, 5.6m height and 1½ storey massing - that it would dominate the original building to the detriment of its character and setting. The cumulative impact with previous extensions is particularly harmful. This goes directly against government guidance.

Furthermore, the proposed extension would deviate from the established plan form of the original dwellinghouse. Government guidance contained within the PPS5 Practical Guide states in Paragraph 182 that: *“the plan form of a building is frequently one of its most important characteristics”*. The deviation from this would harm the special interest of the listed building by confusing and obscuring its historic plan form and creating an addition that would be at odds with the original dwelling. Indeed, officers duly assert that it is one of the few surviving properties in Shalbourne that has maintained its linear form with a gable end that fronts onto the road.

The NPPF makes a distinction between proposals which cause ‘substantial harm’ to a designated heritage asset and those which lead to ‘less than substantial harm’. The former category is reserved for situations such as the complete demolition of a listed building whereas the latter is more applicable in cases such as this. However it is important to stress that the latter does not automatically mean that less than substantial harm is more acceptable, it simply means that a different test is applied. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that *“where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use”*.

The current proposal would not give rise to any public benefits. The extension is not required to secure the long term viability of the building as it already functions as a dwelling and has a perfectly workable internal layout. Accordingly, officers duly submit that the harm cannot be justified in policy terms.

## **10. Conclusion**

The scale of the proposed extension in relation to the original dwelling and the deviation away from the established plan form would harm the character and setting of the listed building and diminish its significance as a designated heritage asset. The proposal is little different from that refused by the committee last year and has signally failed to address the reasons for refusal. No appeal against the original refusal has been submitted. The proposal is contrary to government policy contained within Section 12 of the NPPF and guidance contained in the PPS5 Practice Guide.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That listed building consent is **REFUSED** for the following reason:

The scale of the extension in relation to the original dwelling and the deviation away from the established plan form would harm the character and setting of the listed building and diminish its significance as a designated heritage asset. As such, the proposal is contrary to government policy contained within Section 12 of the NPPF and guidance contained in the PPS5 Practice Guide.