beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, the wealth of its natural resources and so it may be enjoyed by all.

No justification for allowing the commercial fishing hut, dining venue and associated works has been provided by the applicant. No alternative location in closer proximity to Great Durnford Manor and therefore less obtrusive, appears to have been considered.

The site lies in open countryside which is designated within a Special Landscape Area (SLA) where Policy C6 of the Salisbury Local Plan applies. Within the SLA, the landscape is considered worthy of being preserved and only development which is essential to the rural economy or desirable for the enjoyment of its amenities will be permitted. The location, scale and nature of such development will be carefully controlled in order to conserve the character of the SLA.

My clients contend that the erection of the fishing hut, which is a substantial structure with concrete foundations covering 28.25 sq. m. comprising a veranda and 4 rooms together with a vehicular access road amount to a significant and unacceptable built development in this unspoilt and tranquil part of the Avon valley where there is no demonstrable need for such a facility. Combined with its use for corporate fishing events, the development is completely out of keeping with the character of the river valley. The Avon valley is renowned for its rural character and high nature conservation value. Development of the description which has taken place puts this character at serious risk.

Despite the fact that additional tree planting has taken place in an attempt to hide the hut, it remains very visible from my clients' side of the river and will be more visible in the autumn/winter. The access road too will remain visible and is in reality a scar on the landscape. In any event, the fact that development may be partially screened from view, does not make it acceptable in planning policy terms.

6. The site also lies within an Area of Special Archaeological Significance. Policy CN21 requires that where development may affect a known or potential site of archaeological interest, the Local Planning Authority will request an archaeological evaluation to be carried out before determination of the application. My clients assume that with the application such an evaluation has not been carried out by the applicants since it was not included with the application.

7. Local Plan Policy G1 requires that any proposed development should conserve both the natural environment and the cultural heritage in the district. Policy G2 sets criteria against which development proposals should be evaluated. Among these are respect for existing beneficial landscape and ecological features and avoidance of loss of important open areas. The unauthorised development which has taken place is considered by my clients to be contrary to these policies for the reasons expressed in the letter.

8. With regard to nature conservation issues, the fishing hut is located some 30m from the east bank of the River Avon. The access roadway is much closer. The River

Avon is notified as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (the River Avon System SSSI). The reasons for notification for the SSSI explain that the Avon is richer and more varied than in most chalk streams with over 180 species of aquatic plant having been recorded, one of the most diverse fish faunas in Britain and a wide range of aquatic invertebrates. The water quality of the Avon and northern tributaries are affected by high levels of phosphates and nitrates. These appear to adversely affect the flora, especially downstream of sewage discharges.

The river is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (the River Avon SAC) (1994 Habitats Regulations).

The Annex I habitat that is a primary reason for selection of this site is 'Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitans* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation. The site also supports Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection. These are Desmoulin's whorl snail, Sea lamprey, Brook lamprey, Atlantic salmon, and Bullhead.

As such the river is of international nature conservation importance and is afforded a high degree of statutory protection.

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 9 *Biodiversity and Geological Conservation* notes that:

The aim of planning decisions should be to prevent harm to biodiversity and geological conservation interests. Where granting planning permission would result in significant harm to those interests, local planning authorities will need to be satisfied that the development cannot reasonably be located on any alternative sites that would result in less or no harm. In the absence of any such alternatives, local planning authorities should ensure that, before planning permission is granted, adequate mitigation measures are put in place. Where a planning decision would result in significant harm to biodiversity and geological interests which cannot be prevented or adequately mitigated against, appropriate compensation measures should be sought. If that significant harm cannot be prevented, adequately mitigated against, or compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

With respect to SSSIs para 8 states that:

'Where a proposed development on land within or outside a SSSI is likely to have an adverse effect on an SSSI (either individually or in combination with other developments), planning permission should not normally be granted. Where an adverse effect on the site's notified special interest features is likely, an exception should only be made where the benefits of the development, at this site, clearly outweigh both the impacts that it is likely to have on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest and any broader impacts on the national network of SSSIs. Local authorities should use conditions and/or planning obligations to mitigate the harmful aspects of the development and where possible, to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the site's biodiversity or geological interest.'