Bishops Cannings Parish Council
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Mr Jonathan James
Planning Officer
Wiltshire Council
(via email)

24 August 2026

Dear Mr James,

BISHOPS CANNINGS PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING COMMENTS: PL/2026/03683

SITE Cannings Hill Garage, Horton Road, Devizes, SN10 2JG

PROPOSAL Demolition of existing buildings and the erection of a freestanding 24 hour restaurant and takeaway with drive-through facility, children's play area, car parking, landscaping and associated works, including visual signage and ordering displays.

PRINCIPAL AND ASSOCIATED PROPOSALS

a. **PL/2026/03683**: Full Planning Permission (Demolition of existing garage buildings and erection of freestanding 24hr drive-through restaurant/takeaway);
b. **PL/2026/03702**: Advertisement Consent (Installation of internally illuminated signage to comprise; 4 no. fascia signs, 3 no. booth lettering, 1 no. digital booth screen and 4 no. yellow soffit lights);
c. **PL/2026/03737**: Advertisement Consent (Installation of a freestanding totem sign); and,
d. **PL/2026/03738**: Advertisment Consent (Various site signage including 4 no. freestanding signs, 1 no. banner unit, 1 no. playland sign and 17 no. dot signs).

INTRODUCTION

1. Bishops Cannings Parish Council objects to all four of the proposals listed above.

2. The Council is supportive of development on the land between the A361 London Road and Horton Road. There are benefits in terms of local employment (especially for young people), additional consumer choice and competition and general economic investment. A separate application on this land (PL/2026/01361: The Bike School) has already been supported with comments. A third planning application is anticipated on the main parcel of the land described, on which planning consent for commercial activity has already been granted at appeal. The Council considers it imperative that Wiltshire Council planners take a strategic, holistic and coherent approach to this area and to the likely three schemes, not least with respect to vehicular and pedestrian access and road safety.

3. That said, the area is sensitive on a number of levels. The closest property (Elder, on the A361) is 10m away and directly opposite the proposed development. Many other residents live within line of sight and/or audible range of the proposal. The North Wessex Downs (NWD) National Landscape is within 450m. The National Grid has invested in a major engineering project to bury 4.6km of 400KV cables and to remove 13 pylons as part of its NWD Visual Impact Provision to improve environmental and visual amenity.

4. **The Council considers that a formulaic, 24 hour fast-food operation, designed to encourage drive-through, vehicle-based custom, would not sit well within this setting.** Equally out of place would be the invasive nature of bold and overt commercial branding which would dominate the locality generally, especially for residents living in the immediate vicinity. That alone would sit uncomfortably within our semi-rural and rural environment. It would also run counter to the National Grid's considerable and ongoing efforts to enhance visual amenity of the landscape and our parish. Litter and noise remain fundamental concerns. Finally, the adverse impacts on traffic flow and density, as well as vehicle and pedestrian road safety are enduring and grave concerns, as set out below.

5. The Parish Council therefore strongly objects to the principal planning application (**PL/2026/03683**) and to its three associated applications (**PL/2026/03702**, **PL/2026/03737** and **PL/2026/03738**) and enjoins Wiltshire Council to refuse permission for all four of them.

OBJECTIONS

6. **Residential Amenity** (PL/2026/03683). Objections here focus on disturbance, noise and odour:

a. **The applicant seeks permission for a 24 hour drive-through restaurant, immediately opposite established residential properties. The setting is a rural and semi-urban parish, on the cusp of a National Landscape. The only McDonald's restaurant in Wiltshire known to the Parish Council to operate on a 24 hour basis is at Solstice Park, Amesbury. It serves road users on the adjacent, arterial A303. There are no properties near that facility. By contrast, the A361 through Devizes and the parish of Bishops Cannings is not a major arterial route, yet residential properties stand as close as 10m from the boundary of this proposed development.**

b. Residents and Councillors are concerned at the additional disturbance and noise which would emanate from this proposed facility, especially if it were to operate through the silent hours. Noise would be transmitted into nearby properties from a range of sources: car, truck and motorbike engines running at idle, in and around the drive-through scheme; car doors opening and closing; the manoeuvring of supply chain delivery HGVs; the use of external speakers by customers to talk with staff; and general noise and voices of patrons. **Permeating through the night air, this noise would have an adverse impact on local residents trying to sleep at any time, let alone in the record-breaking heat of the 2026 summer.**

c. **Were permission for this facility to be granted, a condition would be sought to limit the permitted hours of operation to between 07:30 and 22:30.**

d. Councillors met with representatives of McDonald's UK and their consultants and highlighted that there were neither significant national nor local traffic volumes overnight, nor major industries locally working 24 hours to justify round-the-clock operation. A local food manufacturer and even the emergency services all had their own facilities within two miles. Representatives offered no substantive data to support the generic claim of a demand for 24 hour provision in this location.

e. **The scale and nature of commercial-grade extraction systems used in large scale, fast-food operations would result in both mechanical noise and strong, sharp cooking odours pervading the area and into people's homes.**

f. The operation and business model as proposed would be vastly different to the limited hours and scale of activity of the preceding garage-based enterprises.

g. Taken together, **these factors show that the proposals - located so close to residential properties and adjacent to a National Landscape - would adversely affect residential amenity.** In doing so, it would also run counter to **Wiltshire Core Policy 57 (Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Setting)**.

7. **Landscape, Light Pollution and Visual Incursion**. (PL/2026/03702, PL/2026/03737 and PL/2026/03738). Objections here focus on the nature, design and extent of the visual impact of the three applications listed:

a. **The heavily-branded, fast-food, drive-through and restaurant facility sits merely 450m from the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. This is within sight of where National Grid has invested millions of pounds to deliver its enhanced Visual Impact Provision (VIP) project with the removal of 4.6km of overhead powerlines and 13 pylons from the landscape.**

b. **By the end of winter 2026/27, road users and walkers alike will benefit from unencumbered views across a nationally and historically important landscape**. This will be true when approaching the parish of Bishops Cannings and the town of Devizes along the A361 from the north, and when leaving in the opposite direction. **Those benefits would stand at risk of being annulled should road users and pedestrians be confronted by a pre-fabricated restaurant facility, built to a standardised design and dominating this prestigious location. Moreover, it is proposed that this be watched over and illuminated by an 8m branded and internally-illuminated totem, as well as by a mass of branded signage, column-mounted lights, and illuminated display panels.**

c. **This would have a jarring and adverse impact on the locale.** There would be nothing quiet or unassuming in this development, were it to be approved as designed. Instead of being sympathetic to the historic rural parish environment and adjacent medieval market town, it would risk welcoming people to 'McDonald's Land'. There would be no escaping the bold and ever-present illumination and corporate branding, regardless of any attempts to tone down the colour palette.

d. **Properties stand as close as 10m from the proposed development. This would mean that residents would face a fundamental transition in circumstance: from quiet semi-urban setting to brash commercial activity, with the consequent and ever-present visual incursion and light pollution**.

e. The Parish Council strongly objects to this proposed facility and its design, not least when sited so close to the National Landscape. The extensive investment by the National Grid to protect and enhance local amenity – which the community has welcomed - would be negated. **Residents would instead be presented with an uncompromising, heavily-branded corporate facility. Specifically, the Parish Council objects to:**

i. **the inclusion of an 8m, internally-illuminated and branded totem, which would visually dominate the site and immediate area, while also directly overlooking residents' homes, some as close as 10m away**;

ii. **the designed use of column-mounted lights, instead of focusing entirely on low-level, adjustable bollard lighting** to blend the facility better into the landscape and to minimise light pollution; and,

iii. **the prominence and presence of multiple digital signs, booths and soffit lighting, which create a harsh, functional, commercial vision**.

f. **Taken together, these proposals would impose the garish glow of an unapologetically corporate operation within a sensitive and historically relevant setting, on the cusp of a National Landscape.** As such the proposals directly challenge the tenets of **Wiltshire Core Policy 51 (Landscape)**.

8. **Litter, Ecology and Biodiversity** (PL/2026/03683, PL/2026/03702, PL/2026/03737 and PL/2026/03738). Objections here focus on a range of impacts from these proposals, namely: the environment; litter; the associated risk of extending the extant problem of nesting seagulls; and the adverse impact on bat and other species. Specifically:

a. The Parish Council already operates an extensive and regular servicing regime for litter bins across the parish, including within this area. It also works collaboratively with volunteer groups, including with grant support, in order to keep on top of the issue. This is particularly true amidst the growing trend for fly-tipping.

b. The proposed development of a 24 hour fast-food facility at the Cannings Hill garage site highlights the Council's principal concerns over the environment, especially in terms of litter. **Regardless of the developer-imposed undertaking seemingly for restaurant staff to conduct three litter picks per day, this would only cover a radius of 150m from the site. Health and safety grounds would apparently prohibit this litter scavenge activity incorporating the adjacent A361, the verges of which directly abut the site. The prospects of seriously spoiling the area's visual amenity through discarded litter are real.**

c. **The terms *'drive-through' and 'fast-food'* are synonymous with modern-day environmental pollution. They are intrinsically linked to the realities of illegal littering of the land with food waste and its associated packaging.** In this context, the immediate proximity of, and likely impact upon, the beautiful, environmentally sensitive and historically important North Wessex Downs National Landscape remains a serious concern, let alone a radius of 150m from the site.

d. In both Devizes town and the parish of Bishops Cannings there is an extant issue and nuisance from nesting seagulls. This already impacts businesses, property and residents. The presence of a fast-food and drive-through facility, along with the inherent risks of increased levels of food waste and other litter across a wide area, would only serve to exacerbate this problem. **Were any of the proposals to be approved despite these objections, then the netting of buildings and structures to prevent seagulls nesting, as well as the provision of secure waste bins, must be incorporated into the conditions set.**

e. The issues of proposed structures and lighting (at para 7 above) relate just as much to ecology and wildlife as to residents. **The impact of light profusion and pollution on bird and bat populations in the immediate locale, especially in terms of their transit and feeding routes and corridors, needs to be properly understood and accounted for.** This might require further bat surveys.

9. **Road Safety, Vehicular and Pedestrian Access** (PL/2026/03683). Objections here relate to wider and serious concerns over all aspects of road safety for motorists, vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. While addressing the specific planning application listed here, these comments have been mirrored in previous comments to PL/2026/01361 (The Bike School). They will also be reiterated in any response to the anticipated application by the prospective developer for Tesco on land north of Horton Road, known as Moonraker Park, which has just been subject to public consultation). Specifically:

a. The application above involves a single vehicular access. It will be used by those wishing to park and use the inside restaurant; those using the drive-through facility; and the supply-chain HGVs delivering to site between three and five times each week. **The application also involves three pedestrian crossings. None of them would be controlled. Two would be at the adjacent roundabout to cross the A361 and Horton Road, with the third on Horton Road**;

b. This application, taken together with PL/2026/01361 (The Bike School) and a likely imminent third application for the adjacent Moonraker Park, would collectively entail the provision of five vehicular accesses and seven pedestrian crossings and accesses over short sections of already very busy roads. **This would create a high concentration of access and crossing points with up to:**

i. **three vehicular accesses and five pedestrian crossings along 480m of Horton Road between the junction with the A361 and the mini-roundabout at Ernle Drive;** and,

ii. two vehicular accesses and two pedestrian crossings along the A361 London Road running northwards for 375m from the roundabout with Horton Road.

c. **Horton Road is already a busy highway, with single and double-decker buses servicing stops on both sides of the road multiple times per hour. Dedicated school coaches pick up and drop off children attending Bishops Cannings Primary School. Large farm traffic and HGVs also routinely use this road. All of this activity makes crossing Horton Road difficult for pedestrians.** The geometry of the road at its junction with the A361 currently means that HGVs, buses and farm traffic already have to swing onto the opposite side of the road when negotiating the turn into Horton Road. It is believed that this geometry would be adapted were the application to be approved.

d. One of this application's three proposed uncontrolled pedestrian accesses crosses Horton Road to the west of its junction with Ferozeshah Road. It is close to the bus stops on either side of the road. **Drivers often try to overtake stationary buses at these stops, despite the road geometry making it difficult to see pedestrians who might be crossing the road to or from the new restaurant.**

e. There is daily congestion on the A361 London Road heading into Devizes. This is evident during both morning and afternoon rush hours. Southbound traffic on the A361 is consistently backed up from the traffic lights at the junction of London Road with Windsor Drive and the roundabout serving the Hopton Industrial Estate and residential areas via Hopton Road and Hambleton Avenue respectively. **Traffic routinely also backs up the A361 north of the Horton Road roundabout and, as a direct consequence, creates a queue back along Horton Road.**

f. **The lack of any yellow box hatchings on the roundabout means that drivers heading into Devizes routinely choose to loiter on the roundabout. In turn, this denies access to the roundabout for traffic seeking to exit Horton Road and head north up the A361. Gridlock ensues.**

g. Air quality was previously an issue within Devizes, resulting in the need to monitor and collect data. **Air quality could again become a factor should this development contribute to a worsening of congestion in this area.**

h. **There have been two serious road traffic accidents recorded within the last five years on Horton Road**, albeit just to the east of this location. Both incidents involved stationary buses, moving cars and children crossing Horton Road, having just alighted from a bus. **The potential introduction of an increased number and density of uncontrolled crossings, coupled with the prospect of increased traffic flows onto the site of a new drive-through facility, will likely result in an increased risk of road accidents involving vehicles and pedestrians, especially school-aged children.**

i. **The principal concern for the Parish Council is that, to date, there has been no strategic planning oversight or consideration of the collective impact of the current and anticipated schemes, especially with respect to vehicle and pedestrian access and safety.**

j. **Wiltshire Council is therefore requested to take an holistic and strategic view towards access to this entire development area. It should encompass all live applications as well as the imminent (and largest) third scheme. A coherent approach is warranted, focused on the safety of pedestrians and vehicles alike.**

k. Critically, **the Parish Council would wish to see vehicular access for the live schemes and one anticipated development focused – or at least maximised – on the A361 London Road.** Pedestrian access and crossing points along both London Road and Horton Road should be rationalised and consolidated.

CONCLUSIONS

10. **Bishops Cannings Parish Council has listened to its residents and met with representatives of the developer. It concluded that the proposed site of Cannings Hill garage would be unsuitable for a 24 hour fast-food, drive-through restaurant facility. There is no evidence of local demand for this facility during silent hours. The four applications would have a significant and adverse impact on amenity for residents; visual incursion and light pollution; litter and ecology; road safety; and the preservation of what is an environmentally sensitive and historic landscape.**

11. **The Parish Council therefore objects to all four of the listed applications.**

Yours sincerely,

Alison Kent
Clerk to Bishops Cannings Parish Council