



Historic England

Ms Caroline Burn  
South Derbyshire District Council  
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Direct Dial: 0121 625 6860

Our ref: P01593347

6 May 2026

Dear Ms Burn

**T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 & Planning  
(Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990  
LAND AT BLACKWELL LANE, MELBOURNE DE73 8JG  
Application No. DMPA/2025/0637**

Thank you for your letter of 22 April 2026 regarding further information on the above application for planning permission. On the basis of this information, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

**Summary**

The proposals comprise the erection of three bungalows and six dwelling houses, with associated access, parking and landscaping.

The application site lies within the Melbourne Conservation Area and the settings of the Melbourne Castle scheduled monument and the Melbourne Hall grade I Registered Park & Garden. It also effects the settings of the grade I listed Muniment Room within Melbourne Hall Park, and the nearby grade I listed Church of St Michael and St Mary.

Historic England provided previous advice on this scheme in our letters dated 4<sup>th</sup> July and 9<sup>th</sup> December 2025. We did not raise any objections to a sympathetic redevelopment of this site. However, we did note the likelihood for some harm - contrary to the conclusions of the submitted heritage statement - and raised concerns with the level of supporting information provided.

We have now undertaken a detailed walkover of the site and surrounding area with your Conservation Officer in order to try and address the gaps in the application.

We remain of the view that the proposal would result in some harm to significance. However, we are satisfied that appropriate design, materials and detailing could constrain that harm to the lower half of the less-than-substantial category. We would raise no objection to the application on heritage grounds, subject to the advice and safeguards as set out below.



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## Historic England Advice

### *Impact*

The site walkover clarified that the application site would not be appreciable from within the majority of the Registered Park & Garden, apart from a localised area east of the Muniment Room where the roofscape of the development may be visible over the park's boundary walls.

Outside of the park, views were examined looking into and across the conservation area from the allotments to the north of the application site; the open land to the east (within the Conservation area); the edge of the scheduled monument to the northwest; and when moving along Blackwell Lane to the south.

The application site appears centrally in views from the landscape to the east, which provide a panorama taking in the walls of the Registered Park & Garden, the roof of the Muniment Room, the top of the church tower and the site of Melbourne Castle. From these views you can start to appreciate the historic form and development of this part of the conservation area and the prominent position of the scheduled monument site.

Similarly, the site sits up in the key views approaching Melbourne and entering the conservation area along Blackwell Lane. Here it can be read and understood as part of the open land on the edge of the settlement, below the castle, and at the interface with its associated landscape.

The site also dominates the foreground of views south and southwest from the rising ground of the adjacent allotments. These views look down and over towards the park and the church and sit adjacent to the Melbourne Castle scheduled monument.

It remains our position that the development of this site would impact upon the setting of the designated heritage assets and character of the conservation area. However having visited the site we do consider that this impact would be manageable through an appropriate scale of development and good design.

Although a smaller development would have a lower impact, we are satisfied that the currently proposed density, type and scale of housing could be accommodated on this site.

The height and layout should not significantly block or interrupt key views towards the designated heritage assets within the conservation area. However it would still impose into the middle or foreground of several views where the prominence of the designated heritage assets is a significant part of one's experience, or where the historic relationships between assets is particularly legible and important.



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In those views, an inappropriately designed development risks becoming a juxtaposing feature, detracting from our appreciation and understanding of significance.

it is important to note that even without a visual impact there would still be some unmitigable change to the setting of the scheduled monument and character of this part of the conservation area through the loss of this historically open and undeveloped parcel, and the contextual change to the landscape edge of the settlement.

### *Position*

We remain of the view that the proposal's impacts upon the character of the conservation area and setting of the designated heritage assets would result in some harm to significance.

However, we are now satisfied that the level of harm could be constrained to the lower half of the less-than-substantial category through appropriate design.

We therefore have no objection to a sympathetic development which minimises intrusion, blends in with the historic character of the conservation area, and seeks to preserve those elements of setting that make a positive contribution to the significance of the designated heritage assets.

Good quality materials and detailing would be key. The final design should look at the good examples within this part of the conservation area which have successfully mitigated the impacts of new development on character and context, and reflect the building materials and details discussed in the Conservation Area's Character Statement.

We would highlight tonal red bricks with a traditional bond and stone detailing, brick arches and stone sills, traditionally profiled timber joinery, slate roofs and varied roof forms as design choices warranting consideration.

We have no objection in principle to the massing and layout of the development. The view corridor from the east towards the Park & Garden, Muniment Room roof and the church tower should be enhanced through the design where possible. Boundary choices should reflect the characterful stone and brick walls of the conservation area rather than high timber panel fencing, and you should explore where vegetation could be retained within and around the boundaries of the site and where new landscaping could help soften the development in other views.

We would reiterate our previous advice regarding the assessment's reliance on screening and landscape change provided by the as yet undelivered car park development to the east, and the design considerations for any enhanced access off Blackwell Lane.



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We would also reiterate our previous comments regarding the potential archaeological impacts, and would refer you back to the Archaeological Officers in Derbyshire County Council's Conservation, Heritage and Design team on this matter.

### **Recommendation**

We have no objection to the development on heritage grounds, subject to the advice and safeguards as set out above.

The development would result in some harm to significance of the designated heritage, however appropriate design, quality materials and good detailing in accordance with the character of the conservation area (and secured by conditions where necessary) should ensure the level of harm is maintained within the lower half of less-than-substantial.

If your authority proposes to determine the application in its current form, you should be satisfied that the harm has clear and convincing justification and is weighed against the public benefits of the scheme in line with NPPF 213 - 215.

You should take into account the statutory requirements of Section 66(1) and 72(1) of the 1990 Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of the grade I listed buildings, and to pay special attention to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

The effect of the application on the significance of the non-designated below ground archaeology within the site must also be considered (NPPF 216).

Your authority should take these representations into account when determining this application. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us.

Yours sincerely

Nick Carter

### **Nick Carter**

Inspector of Ancient Monuments

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cc: Francesca Siviter, Conservation Officer, South Derbyshire District Council



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