Proposed Extension to Milestones, 6, Old Track, Midford
Planning & Design Statement

Ref. 2118-P-DAS-01
Revision B
September 2023

This report accompanies a Householder Planning Application for a pair of single-storey extensions to ‘Milestones’, Old Track, Midford, and sets out to demonstrate that the proposed works are an appropriate addition to the existing dwelling and the wider site setting in the context of current planning policy.

Context

‘Milestones’ is a detached single storey dwelling sitting within the front half of a generous level plot on Old Track, a narrow no-through lane that serves a number of similar uniformly spaced residential dwellings in a knot of houses between Limpley Stoke Wood and the slopes of Midford hill. The site lies on the northernmost edge of this established development, out of sight of Midford Lane or any other public thoroughfare.

Along the southern edge of the plot, an established mixed hedgerow containing conifers and laurel screens the house from Old Track terminating at the driveway entrance, whilst at the rear the site is less densely planted granting occasional views northwards towards the Limpley Stoke valley. On either side similarly sized plots contain detached dwellings, with a row of conifers on the boundary to the west and a low wall and single storey outbuilding to the east.

The site is within the Bristol & Bath Green Belt, the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a Special Landscape Area. As a result, it is subject to policies CP57 & CP58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework, specifically paragraphs relating to Green Belt. The West Wiltshire Supplementary Planning Guide ‘House Alterations & Extensions’ has also been consulted along with the Freshford and Limpley Stoke Neighbourhood Plan.



The dwelling itself is a single storey mid-20th century bungalow, which was originally constructed on an L-shaped footprint containing a living space in the southern protrusion, and a kitchen, dining room and bedrooms facing the back garden within the main section running east-west. At some point later (presumably the 1970s-1980s- no planning records are available) further structures were added in the form of an extension to the west, containing three further bedrooms (creating a 'T' shaped overall plan form), a lean-to on the rear containing a utility room and a flat roofed entrance porch/hallway in the south-east corner of the original 'L'. It is presumed that the outbuilding running along much of the eastern boundary of the back garden was also constructed at this time.

The western side-extension matches the generously high eaves of the original house along with its 35-degree roof pitch, which gives the house a fairly even balance of roof to wall. Concrete plain tiles are used throughout, but the walling materials differ between the two building phases, with the extensions constructed of a rather utilitarian plain buff reconstituted stone block in contrast to the slightly more decorative textured reconstituted stone blocks of the original house, set in a random length patterned coursing with stone quoins to the corners.



The existing front elevation and porch

Proposal

The applicants, a young family, have owned the house for a couple of years, and in that time they have identified a number of improvements that they would like to make to optimise it for modern family life. A variety of options have been explored in order to determine the best way in which these modest additional needs could be met to the best advantage of the existing house and within the context of current planning policy.

A key factor is the lack of connectivity between the existing house and the outside space, primarily at the rear where there is no direct access into the garden. In order to address this, it is proposed that the existing kitchen and dining room will be amalgamated and reconfigured to create a single kitchen diner. The kitchen area will occupy the former dining room and the dining/living space will be located at the back of the house, connecting into a modest rear extension, which will contain full height gazing and doors onto the garden. This extension will also house a new utility room, replacing the existing lean-to with a more thermally efficient space (the existing structure being of only single skin construction).

At the front of the house, the existing flat roofed entrance porch is of very poor quality and detracts aesthetically from this most prominent aspect of the house. The proposal is therefore to replace it with a new, more integrated structure, with a front door facing the driveway to create a more defined entrance to the house. In order to serve the practical day-to-day needs of family life, its footprint will also be enlarged to accommodate a much-needed boot room.

Both new extensions will be constructed of Bath stone beneath pitched roofs to match the existing built form. By opening the structures up to the rafters internally, a greater sense of space will be created, enhanced by extending some of the glazed elements up into the gables. The introduction of glazing beyond the eaves line will also give the house a subtle new dynamic, which will be aesthetically beneficial to the entire building by reducing the existing visual weight of the large roofs. Elements of timber cladding will also be introduced on the new structures to interrupt the stone walling and further break down the massing.

Beyond the house, it is also proposed to replace the existing outbuilding with a new structure of broadly similar size, the current one being in a state of advanced dilapidation and no longer fit for purpose. The existing structure is awkwardly built off the boundary wall, so the proposal is to construct the new building marginally further into the plot, away from the party line on a new concrete base. The northern end of the new outbuilding will be insulated to enable it to contain a home office. The boundary elevation will be constructed of reconstituted stone, similar to the existing, whilst the garden elevations will be clad in timber to create a dialogue with the new extensions on the house.

In developing the proposals regard has been given to the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF, directing development in the green belt, which state that the extension or alteration of a building will not be inappropriate development provided it ‘*does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building’.*

The volume calculations are as follows:

- Original dwelling **425m^3**
- Existing Extensions **251m^3**
- Total **676m^3**

Therefore, the existing house is already at **159%** of its original size.

- Proposed Extensions: 53m^3 (front) + 65m^3 (rear) = 118m^3

The existing porch and utility room extension would be removed:

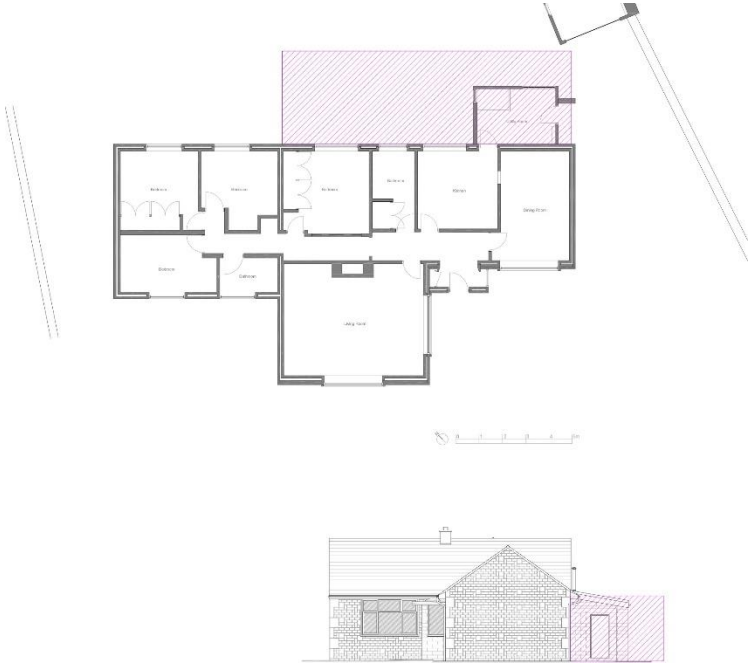
- Existing porch 7m^3 + utility room 30m^3 = 37m^3

The total proposed volume would therefore be:

- Original dwelling **425m^3**
- Extensions: 251m^3 + 118m^3 - 37m^3 = **332m^3**
- Total **757m^3**

This Results in a building **178%** of its original size, an increase of 19% over the existing situation. As no definition or quantification of the term ‘disproportionate’ is given in the NPPF each case must therefore be determined on its own merits, however it is also instructive to consider local precedents. Planning consent PL/2021/05762 was granted in August 2021, for the extension of 6 Uplands Close, a dwelling in a more prominent position on Midford Lane roughly 150m southwest of Milestones. In that case an extension of 240% was permitted, and whilst the additional volume was found to be disproportionate, the conclusion was that its impact on the Green Belt was limited by its design and location within the established village building boundaries. Another mitigating factor considered was the opportunity for a ‘PD fallback’, where the volume of an alternative scheme permissible under Permitted Development Rights could be taken into account when assessing whether the proposed volume was appropriate. In that case, the scope for an alternative Permitted Development scheme was limited, however at Milestones there are greater possibilities.

The sketches below indicate the form that a PD compliant extension to the rear of the original house could take. Extending to the rear of the house by 4 metres with a flat roof at the existing eaves height of 2.8 metres:



Such an extension would have a volume of 138m3, which would create a total proposed volume of:

- Original dwelling **425m^3**
- Existing Extensions **221m^3** (with the 30m3 utility room subsumed by the PD extension subtracted)
- PD Extension **138m^3**
- Total **784m^3**

This would result in a building **184%** of its original size, larger than that proposed. With this taken into account, the fact that Milestones is in a discrete location away from public thoroughfares and the proposed extensions do not increase the height of the building or extend far beyond its established footprint leading to a sprawl in form, it is concluded that it would not represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Similarly, the proposed replacement outbuilding will have very little impact on the green belt beyond the existing structure. It will sit broadly upon the same footprint, with only a small increase in height to enable a better insulated roof- the volume increasing from 105m^3 to 134m^3. Again, this increase needs to be judged in the context that the building is located away from any major public vantage points (although the site is on the northern edge of the knot of development there are no distant views in which it features), the enlargement will not lead to any additional sprawl in terms of footprint across the site and there are currently unexploited class E development rights that could be used to construct a garden office of much greater size within the site as a fall back option.

Conclusion

The proposed works to Milestones are the next step in the evolution of the house, enabling it to accommodate, for the foreseeable future, a young family who have made it their home. Alongside spatial improvements, the new structures provide the opportunity to enhance the functionality, appearance and energy efficiency of the dwelling overall.

The modest additional volume is within acceptable parameters and has been sensitively deployed, with no discernible impact on the openness of the green belt or AONB.

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