PLANNING STATEMENT

Erection of an outbuilding to be used for office space and holiday accommodation and installation of solar panels on roof of dwelling

Eden Grove
Zeals
Warminster
BA12 6PA

Lydia Dunne (MSc Urban Planning; MRTPI)
Whiteacre Planning Ltd
www.whiteacreplanning.com
whiteacreplanning@gmail.com
01963 371180 0789 4020 735

RTPI
mediation of space · making of place

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1. Introduction

1.1 This statement has been prepared in order to explain and support an application for the erection of an outbuilding at Eden Grove, Zeals for use as an office (Class E) and bed and breakfast/holiday accommodation.

1.2 This request has been prepared on behalf of Mr and Mrs Bullivant.

1.3 The applicants run a successful business from the property. In order to expand the business, they require some additional office space to allow their employees to meet or work together when necessary. They propose that the new building has a flexible use to allow for holiday letting when not in use by the business.

1.4 This request should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Location plan
- Site Plans
- Floorplans and elevations

2. Site and surroundings

2.1 The site is located within open countryside approximately 6km northeast of Wincanton and 5.5km northwest of Gillingham just inside the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



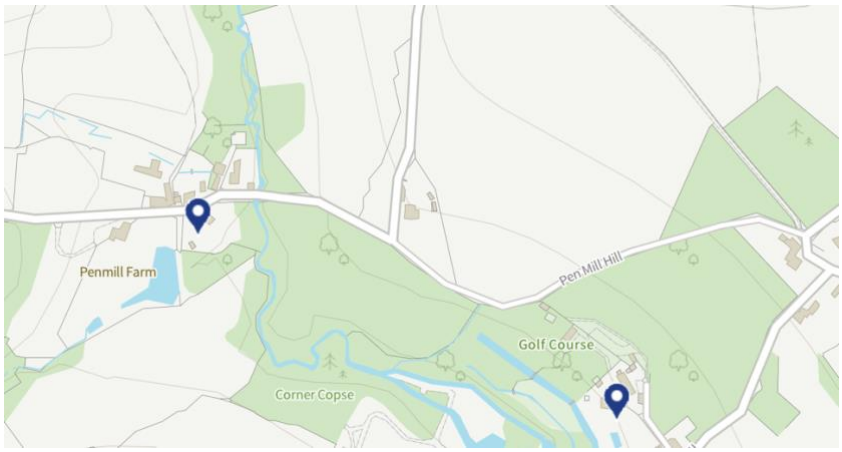
Source: Magic Maps showing location of site and AONB edged and shaded red

2.2 Eden Grove is a detached dwelling with a number of outbuildings on a large plot of around 0.4 hectares or nearly an acre. There is a small outbuilding on the western boundary with a tin roof which is being demolished as it is unsafe. The proposed building would replace this building.



Satellite image of site showing extent of site

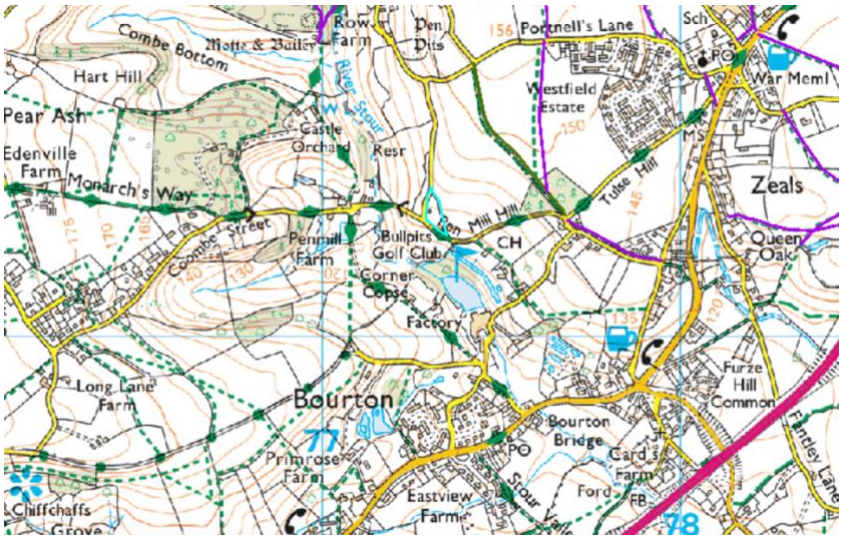
2.3 Eden Grove is not listed and there are no listed buildings or other heritage assets within the vicinity of the site.



Source: Historic England showing nearest listed buildings

2.4 There is an extensive network of Public Rights of way in the area, including the Monarch's Way. As well as enabling guests to explore the countryside in this

location, the lanes and footpaths in the area allow for easy access nearby facilities such as the pubs at Bourton or Zeals (The White Lion Inn and The Bell and Crown respectively).



Source: Wiltshire Council

2.5 The site is within Floodzone 1 where there is a very low probability of flooding and where there are no restrictions on flooding grounds.



2.6 The site is not within any area currently affected by issues to do with Nutrient Neutrality, including the River Avon SAC.

3. Proposal

3.1 The proposal is for a 10 x 6 metre single storey building to be erected in the back garden of the house for a mixed use as an office and holiday accommodation.

3.2 The proposed building would include 3 rooms and a shower room. There would be a kitchenette in the main room for the preparation of snacks or light meals if

necessary and beds would be provided in the 2 smaller rooms to provide guest accommodation when needed. The proposal also includes a solar array to be attached to the roof of the main house as shown on the plans. These would provide power to the new building and any excess could be used by the house or sold back to the grid.

4. Gardenforum

4.1 Gardenforum Ltd was established in 2000 and has become the leading news source for the retail horticulture industry in the UK attracting about 50,000 page views a month.

4.2 The business currently has 2 full time employees and one new part-time employee. 2 of these currently work from home. The business is run and managed from Eden Grove - the other worker lives nearby in Mere, the part-timer is based near the Forest of Dean.

4.3 The business is being held back by the absence of a space to meet and work together. There is nowhere to meet with clients and advertisers. There were some small outbuildings at Eden Grove, but the amount of renovation to bring these into practical use as office space was considered too extensive, so the proposal is to replace these buildings with a Norwegian Chalet.

4.4 The proposed building can be used as office space where the Gardenforum team can meet and work together when necessary and where meeting with clients can be held. The site is due to be connected to superfast broadband in the next few weeks.

4.5 Eden Grove is located in the Cranborne Chase AONB on the edge of the Stourhead woods. This is a popular place for weekenders.

4.6 The plan is to use the new building as an office and workspace when Gardenforum requires it. The additional space will encourage expansion and allow us to take on additional staff. We also propose that the building suits a flexible use in that it can provide both office space and some sleeping accommodation. The building can then be used for visiting clients or for bed and breakfast accommodation for families over the weekends and holiday periods, when it will not be needed by Gardenforum.

4.7 Gardenforum is already environmentally strong as it is a leading information source on sustainability, energy saving, peat-replacement and sustainable garden

products. Being an online only business, its carbon footprint is already light. The site will house solar panels, sourced through Wiltshire CC's Solar Together, that will be used to power the new building.

5. Planning history

14/08116/FUL Demolish single storey lean-to and construct new two storey extension to rear and single storey extension to front. Approved with conditions.

6. Relevant planning policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2023

Chapter 2	Achieving sustainable development
Chapter 6	Building a strong, competitive economy
Chapter 9	Promoting sustainable transport
Chapter 11	Making effective use of land
Chapter 12	Achieving well-designed places
Chapter 14	Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
Chapter 15	Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015

CP1	Settlement strategy
CP2	Delivery strategy
CP34	Additional employment land
CP39	Tourist development
CP51	Landscape
CP57	Ensuring high quality design and place shaping
CP60	Sustainable transport
CP62	Development impacts on the transport network
CP67	Flood risk

Other material considerations

National Planning Practice Guidance

Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019

7. Planning considerations

7.1 The starting point in the consideration of this proposal is the presumption in favour of sustainable development that is at the heart of both the NPPF and the Wiltshire Development Plan. This means that planning permission should be approved without delay where an application accords with an up-to-date development plan.

7.2 The key issues in this case are as follows:

- Principle
- Landscape impact
- Access and parking
- Climate change

8. Principle

8.1 The site is located in a countryside location as defined by the Wiltshire Core Strategy where new development is strictly controlled. The site is, however, within close proximity to nearby settlements including Bourton, Zeals and Wincanton which offer with a range of services and facilities. It is also very accessible being only 1km from the A303.

8.2 Both the NPPF and the Wiltshire Core Strategy make provision for economic and tourism development outside of settlements. The NPPF is supportive of schemes such as this at Paragraph 84:

> a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;

b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;

c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside;

8.3 Paragraph 85 of the NPPF also recognises that proposals such as this may be required to 'meet local business and community needs in rural areas' and that such sites may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements'.

8.4 Policy 34 support proposals for the expansion of businesses adjacent to settlements. This is provided the proposal is appropriate in scale and does not adversely impact the surrounding area or detract from residential amenity.

8.5 The provision of new tourist accommodation in Wiltshire is supported by Core Strategy Policy CP39. This policy generally seeks to direct new tourism towards the larger settlements, but the Council recognises that the need for exceptions provided that:

- The scale, design and use of the proposal is compatible with its wider landscape setting and would not detract from the character or appearance of the landscape or settlement and would not be detrimental to the amenity of residential areas.
- The building is served by adequate access and infrastructure.
- The site has reasonable access to local services and a local employment base.

8.6 This application is for the erection of a dual-purpose building to support a well-established local business which is hoping to expand. The building is modest in scale and would not cause any adverse impacts such as landscape harm or amenity issues – nor would it adversely impact highway safety in this location.

8.7 Given that the proposal complies with Paragraphs 84 and 85 of the NPPF and Core Strategy Policies CP34 and CP39, we consider the principle to be acceptable in this case.

9. Landscape impact

9.1 Given the location of the site, within the Cranborne Chase AONB, it is important to take into consideration the visual impact of the proposal. The proposed building

is modest in scale and replaces existing outbuildings within a residential garden. The site has a high degree of visual enclosure being surrounded by mature trees and hedgerows and an existing stone wall which runs along part of the western boundary adjacent to the location of the new building.

9.2 The proposed building is unlikely to be visible from outside the site, though the top of the roof might be seen from the lane. This will be grey and more muted in tone than the existing tin roof currently visible. It is proposed to introduce some additional native planting to soften the boundary and this is shown on the plans submitted.

9.3 In relation to the use of the building to provide occasional holiday accommodation, the AONB Management Plan is supportive of this sort of sustainable tourist development as it encourages people to visit the AONB and support local businesses.

9.4 The proposed solar panels would not be visible from outside the site as the house cannot be seen from any nearby public vantage points.

9.5 It is not considered that the proposal would adversely affect the character of the area and there would not be any harmful visual impact associated with the scheme in line with Core Strategy CP51.

10. Access and parking

10.1 The site is served by an existing access onto an unnamed lane which connects Coombe Street and Portnells Lane. This lane is extremely lightly trafficked, Eden Grove being the only property on the lane. The proposal would increase vehicle movements to and from the site but these would be staggered and not of a number of frequency that would significantly affect highway safety.

10.2 Visibility is 2.4m x 20m in the southerly direction and at least 2.4m x 43m to the north.

10.3 There is a very large parking and turning area with parking sufficient for at least 7 cars as shown on the plans submitted. The is more than enough parking for any employees working in the office or any guests.

11. Climate change

11.1 The proposal has been designed to be highly energy efficient and as sustainable as possible. The building is constructed using sustainable timber and will use rainwater harvesting. The proposal also includes solar panels to provide power and an EV charging point will be installed and made available to employees and guests.

12. Conclusion

12.1 Though a slightly unusual dual use building, but the proposal complies with all the relevant national and local planning policies including Paragraphs 84 and 85 of the NPPF and Core Strategy policies CP34, 39 and 51.

12.2 We therefore respectfully request that planning permission be granted without delay.