CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/08765
Application Type:	Householder planning permission
Site Inspection:	
Consultation ends:	20 November 2023
Case officer:	Selina (Nina) Parker-Miles

Site Address:	Willow Cottage, Leigh Road, Bradford on Avon, BA15 2RQ
Proposal:	Proposed Single Storey Rear Extensions & Front Porch
Recommendation:	Approve with Conditions

Proposal and Site Description

This application relates to a detached bungalow, Willow Cottage located on the northern outskirts of Bradford on Avon. The host dwelling benefits from a semi-rural position with a large driveway to the front elevation. The host dwelling lies within the West Wiltshire Green Belt and within the consultation zone of the Bath and Bradford on Avon Special Area of Conservation for bats

This application is seeking permission for single storey rear extensions and an extension to the existing porch area. The works would facilitate extended living areas at ground floor.

Policies

National Context:
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Local Context:
CP2 Delivery Strategy
CP7 – Spatial Strategy for the Bradford on Avon Community Area
CP50 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
CP57 - Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
Bradford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan 2013 – 2026 Made October 2017

Key Issues

Principle of Development
Development within the West Wiltshire Green Belt
Design and Visual Impact
Neighbouring Amenity
Ecology

Relevant Planning History

W/86/00897/FUL Conversion of farm building into dwelling and use of farmyard and buildings for garages, horse loose boxes and stores - Approve with conditions
13/06867/FUL Construction of a new vehicular access and blocking up of existing access. Change of use from agricultural to residential - Approve with conditions
14/08895/FUL Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of replacement dwelling. Change of use of land to North East of site from agricultural to residential (Resubmission of 14/05891/FUL) - Approve with conditions
15/03886/VAR Variation of condition 4 on 14/08895/FUL to allow for the demolition and rebuilding of the buildings in two phases - Approve with conditions
16/10386/VAR Variation of Condition 2 of 14/08895/FUL - Omit the cellar and associated staircase and add a first floor en-suite - Approve with conditions

Consultation Responses
Bradford on Avon Town Council - No objection
Wiltshire Council Archaeology - No objection

Representations
Consultation consisted of advertisement by site notice and neighbour notification. No representation letters were received.

Planning Considerations and Assessment
Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require that the determination of planning applications must be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Principle of Development
The proposed development comprises additions and alterations to an existing building within the built envelope of the application site. The proposed additions and alterations would be wholly within the residential curtilage and as such the principle of development is acceptable subject to the following considerations. Whilst the proposals would have some impact on openness, due to their scale, siting, close relationship with existing development and the local topography, it is considered that this would be minimal.

Principle of Development in the West Wiltshire Green Belt
The 2021 NPPF regards the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt as ‘inappropriate development’, unless the proposal falls within the criteria set out in paragraph 149. Within this list of exceptions, extensions or alterations to existing buildings may be acceptable if they do not result in “disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building”.

The NPPF does not quantify what disproportionate constitutes and the Council does not prescribe a volumetric /percentage maximum, so a planning judgement must be made in each case and be assessed on its own individual merits. The NPPF does however define ‘original building’ as “a building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was originally built.”

Planning history and aerial photography and the historic mapping of the original building (as illustrated below) reveal that Willow Cottage is a covered barn formerly part of the adjacent Leigh Farmhouse. Planning permission was consented in 2014 (14/08895/FUL) for demolition of the existing dwelling and construction of a replacement dwelling alongside change of use of the land to the northeast of the site from agricultural to residential. The consented scheme comprised of a two storey dwelling, however that permission has not been implemented.



Front elevation of the previously consented scheme (14/08895/FUL)

This scheme seeks to introduce single storey extensions to the existing single storey dwelling and the agent has submitted green belt calculations placing the existing built form on site as having a volume of 508m3 with the proposed extensions as equating to volumes of 302m3, however officers have calculated them as being in the region of 280m3,so in fairness will use this figure to calculate the potential volume to be erected on site if this proposed scheme is implemented.

The volume of the original dwelling (as it stood as of 1947) has been calculated as having a volume of 508m3.

Original building =508m3
Plus
Proposed extensions = 280m3
=788m3 (Proposed volume on application site)

The proposed extension subject to this scheme would introduce an additional volume from the original building (302m3) of 55%. Based on these volumes the scheme is on balance, deemed to be proportionate in Green Belt terms, although at the upper end of what could be considered proportionate additions in the meaning of the NPPF.

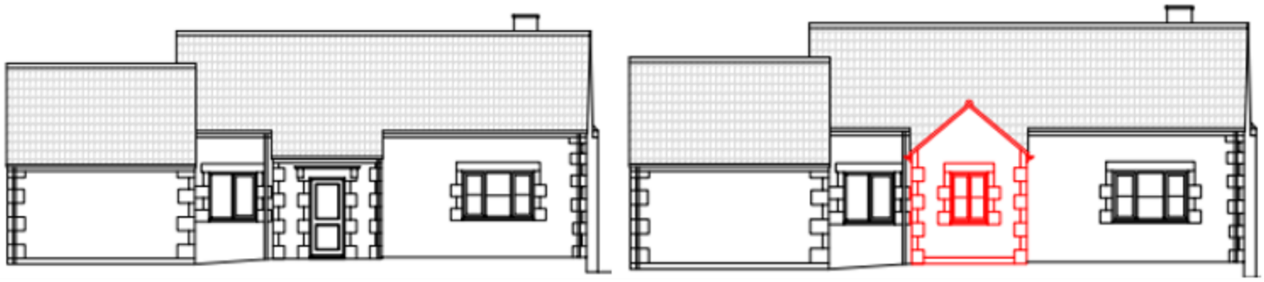
Officers acknowledge the existing built form on site and recognise the applicant's efforts to create improved accommodation and officers are also mindful of the fall-back option for any permitted development that could be implemented without consent where its impact could be considered to be more detrimental to the openness of the site. The additional volume would be at single storey level, which would have a limited impact on the openness of the green belt, with the rear extensions not readily visible from the public realm, obscured by the host dwelling. As such, on balance officers conclude that paragraph 149 of the NPPF is satisfied in this instance.

However, if a future planning application is submitted for any additional extensions to the property, it is likely that any significant additional increase in volume would be considered disproportionate and contrary to the guidance of the NPPF. Therefore, it is considered prudent to attach a condition to remove permitted development rights to safeguard the greenbelt from further encroachment.

Design and Visual Impact

Core Policy 57 requires a high standard of design in all new developments, of particular relevance to householder extensions is paragraph (iii) which requires development to respond positively to the existing townscape and landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate the building into its setting.

The extensions would be positioned on the southeast rear elevation, extending beyond the existing footprint. Both the garden room extension and the bedroom extension would utilise a pitched roof form, set down from the existing ridge height with rear facing gables, and the dining room extension would employ a flat roof form with a glass lantern inserted to illuminate the internal space. The garden room extension would employ banks of glazing on both side elevations with the rear gable fully glazed and the central dining room extension would insert bi-folding doors on the rear elevation. The bedroom extension would insert a window overlooking the applicant's private rear curtilage.



Existing (left) and proposed (right) front elevation



Existing (left) and proposed (right) rear elevation

The porch on the front elevation would be marginally extended with the principal access doorway orientated on the side elevation and a window inserted on the front elevation. All extensions would

employ matching materials to the existing, rubble stone with concrete roof tiles (rubber membrane roof on the flat roof extension) and white UPVC fenestration.

The use of matching materials would ensure the proposal would integrate into the host dwelling and surrounding setting. It is considered that the extensions would by virtue of their height, scale and design constitute complementary additions to the host dwelling that would appear commensurate to the size of the property and plot. The development would therefore comply with Policy CP57 of the WCS.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity
Core Policy 57 of The WCS states that applications for new development must be accompanied by appropriate information to demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire through having regard to the compatibility of adjoining buildings and uses, the impact on the amenities of existing occupants, and ensuring that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development itself, including the consideration of privacy, overshadowing, vibration, and pollution (e.g. light intrusion, noise, smoke, fumes, effluent, waste or litter)

All windows proposed would look out over the applicant's private gardens to the front and rear, replicating the existing arrangement of the host dwelling, therefore, no overlooking concerns are raised.

Give the detached nature of the host dwelling, single storey nature of the proposal, and extended separation distances to the immediate neighbour no concerns are raised in relation to overbearing or overshadowing.

Given the scale of the development proposal, it is considered that the proposed extensions would not result in unacceptable loss of light, overlooking, overshadowing and would not have an overbearing impact upon neighbouring properties. For these reasons, the development proposals would comply with Policy CP57 of the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy

Ecology
The application site sits within the Bath and Bradford on Avon Special Area of Conservation for bats and as this application involves disturbance to the existing roof due consideration has to be given to the potential disturbance of any bats because of the proposed development. As a precautionary measure an informative would be added to any decision that in event any evidence of bat activity is detected that the applicant should follow the advice of a professional ecologist or contact Natural England.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve with conditions

Conditions: (3)

1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:
Location Plan, Block Plan and Existing and Proposed Elevations DWG No AH2023/57 Sheet 1 of 2
Existing and Proposed Floor Plan DWG No AH2023/57 Sheet 2 of 2
All Plans Received 11.10.2023

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No.3) (England) Order 2020 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting or amending those Orders with or without modification), no development within Part 1, Classes A, B or E shall take place on the dwellinghouse hereby permitted or within their curtilage.

REASON: In the interests of the amenity of the area and to enable the Local Planning Authority to consider individually whether planning permission should be granted for additions, extensions or enlargements.

Informatives: (1)

4 If bats or evidence of bats are found during the works, the applicant is advised to stop work and follow advice from an independent ecologist or to contact Natural England's Bat Line through the internet.