CASE OFFICER'S REPORT

Application Reference:	PL/2023/10459
Application Type:	Householder planning permission
Site Inspection:	12 December 2023
Consultation ends:	29 December 2023
Case officer:	Brook Bishop

Site Address:	1 Broadfield Farm, Great Somerford, Chippenham, SN15 5EL
Proposal:	Proposed single storey rear extension, detached new garage, demolish existing conservatory and conversion of existing garage
Recommendation:	Approve with Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION:
The application site comprises a three-bedroom bungalow faced in snecked courses of reconstituted stone with toothed quoins. The bungalow is orientated from northeast to southwest with its front elevation facing northwest towards Seagry Road. It has a pitched roof covered with concrete tiles and a flat roof to the garage adjoining the south-west end.

The site is enclosed by a short drystone boundary wall with access gates via the small lane and public right of way to the west. Within this enclosure is a landscaped and gravelled vehicular access space to its front, a private amenity space to its rear and a small enclosed green space to the end of the garage at the south-west end.

The site is set in a former agricultural area, which is currently undergoing residential redevelopment, on the southern approach into Great Somerford. A public footpath runs along the lane to its west connecting the open countryside with the rural village. The site lies within the settlement boundary of Great Somerford and outside of, but adjacent to, the Great Somerford Conservation Area and is directly opposite the Old Masons Arms. The site is not subject to any high risk of flooding.

PROPOSAL:
The application seeks planning permission for the conversion of the existing garage into one-bedroom accommodation, a single-storey flat-roofed rear extension and the erection of an ancillary pitch-roofed garage for two vehicles.

The rear extension will replace an existing conservatory-style extension and is approximately 3m high and 9.2m wide. The proposed ancillary garage will be approximately 5m high to the ridge and have internal dimensions of approximately 4.9m deep and 5.75m wide. The conversion of the existing garage into one-bedroom accommodation brings the total bedrooms for this dwelling to four bedrooms.

The rear extension, converted garage and the proposed ancillary garage are to be finished in render and the roof of the ancillary garage will be covered in concrete tiles. UPVC windows and doors are proposed for the extension and garage conversion. The proposed new garage initially had an aluminium roll-style door, but these plans were amended to have side-hung timber doors.

POLICIES:

Legislation:

Town and Country Planning Act 1990
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

National Policy:

National Planning Policy Framework - December 2023 (NPPF)
• Paragraphs 11, 131, 135, 201, 203, 205, 206, 207, 208.
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
National Design Guidance (Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places) 2019 (NDG)

Local Policy:

Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS):
• Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy (CP1)
• Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy (CP2)
• Core Policy 13: Spatial Strategy for Malmesbury Community Area (CP13)
• Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design & Space Shaping (CP57)
• Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment (CP58)
• Core Policy 60: Sustainable Transport (CP60)
• Core Policy 62: Development Impacts on the Transport Network (CP62)
• Core Policy 64: Demand Management (CP64)
Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026:
• Car Parking Strategy (CPS)

Neighbourhood Plan:

Great Somerford (incorporating Startley) Neighbourhood Plan – Made 2017 (GSNP)
• Policy GSNP1

Historic England Advice Notes:

The Setting of Heritage Assets. Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (2nd Edition) (GPA3)
Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment. Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2 (GPA2)

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 be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Sections 66 and 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 require the local planning authority, in considering whether to grant planning permission and listed building consent respectively, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Section 72(1) of the same act requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or

enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area in which the building and land are situated.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:
N/92/01966/FUL - ERECTION OF GARAGE (24/11/1992)
N/93/00472/FUL - SINGLE STOREY ANNEX (14/05/1993)
N/04/01536/FUL - CONVERSION OF WORKSHOP INTO RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION (07/07/2004)
N/99/03046/FUL - GARAGE EXTENSION TO DWELLING (18/02/2000)

ISSUES:
The main considerations which are material to the determination of this application are listed below:
• Principle
• Impact on Local Character, Appearance, and the Historic Environment
• Impact on Neighbouring Amenities
• Access and Parking, public rights of way

CONSULTEE RESPONSES:
The Parish Council, and Wiltshire Council's Highways Engineer, Rights of Way and Conservation Officer, were consulted on this application:
• Highways Engineer - no objection but commented on the internal dimensions of the proposed garage and suggested a condition and informative be applied to any approval notice. The comments have been discussed in the Access and Parking section of the assessment.
• Conservation Officer – support subject to conditions that samples of the materials are signed off prior to commencement. These comments have been discussed in the Impact on Local Character, Appearance, and the Historic Environment section of the assessment.

RESPRESENTATIONS:
No letters of representation were received related to this proposal.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT:
Principle:
The site is in Great Somerford, a large village in the Malmesbury Community Area. CP1, 2 and 13 of the WCS set out a settlement and a delivery strategy for the Malmesbury Community Area and confirm that within a large village, the principle of development is considered acceptable, subject to assessment of site-specific impacts, related policy considerations and compliance with the other policies contained within the development plan and the guidance and provisions as contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Therefore, the principle of providing and extending facilities in association with existing residential accommodation is considered acceptable in principle subject to site specific impacts.

Impact on Local Character, Appearance, and the Historic Environment:
Well-designed development should create a strong sense of place and contribute to local distinctiveness by drawing on the local context and by being complementary to the locality. CP57 states that a “high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings”. Well-designed development should also respond to the value of the historic environment by being sympathetic to and conserving heritage assets. CP58 elaborates that development should “protect, conserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment” and that designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting will be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

The GSNP (Policy GSNP1) requires that development at Broadfield Farm minimises its impact on the conservation area and its setting, in terms of the scale, bulk, siting, design and materials in order that they respect the local vernacular built form. Although not formally part of the site allocation, this application site is closely related to the allocation site and this policy is felt relevant in this case.

The application site is set within a former agricultural area which is currently undergoing residential development and therefore now has a more residential feel. It faces towards and lies southeast of the Old Masons Arms which marks the boundary of the Great Somerford Conservation Area. Although not within the designated area, the application site is within the setting of the Great Somerford Conservation Area (designated heritage asset) and therefore also the Old Masons Arms (non-designated heritage asset).

The impact of the proposed development on local character and appearance has therefore been assessed together with its impact on the historic environment. To this end, the Council’s Conservation Officer was consulted on the proposal and their comments have been taken into account as part of this assessment.

Assessment of Significance
The NPPF (201) advises that local planning authorities should identify and assess the significance of heritage assets likely to be directly affected by a proposal, or indirectly through development within their setting, and take this into account when considering the impact of the development on the heritage asset. It defines significance as the “value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic”.

The significance of a heritage asset derives not only from its physical presence, but also from its setting which is defined as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. The setting of a heritage asset is not fixed and may change over time. Elements of its setting may have a positive or negative affect on our appreciation of that significance or may be neutral.

Old Masons Arms (non-designated heritage asset)
The Old Masons Arms is a former inn, now private dwelling, of early or mid-19th century date; constructed from local rubble stone and fronted in local ashlar with quoins. It is built to two-storeys with a symmetrical three-window front, containing a mix of sash window patterns, and has a central entrance containing a six-panel door beneath a flat hood with moulded brackets. It first opened as the New Inn, later renamed the Masons Arms, in 1841 until it closed in c.1968 (qv

British History Online). It has had some modern alterations and rear extensions but remains a characterful building.

Set on the southern edge of the village, the 1st edition 1888 OS map reveals it would have originally been experienced as a solitary building at the border with the open countryside. This is no longer the case, but it continues to be the first building encountered upon arrival from the south by road or public footpath, creating a charming experience as one enters the village. It remains the focal point in the street scene despite the modern development at and around Broadfield Farm to the south, which has had a neutral impact on the ability to appreciate its significance.

Its heritage significance is primarily comprised of its architectural (design), its historic (illustrative) interest and from the positive contribution made by its setting. It is a non-designated heritage asset of local importance which is recognised by its inclusion in the Great Somerford Conservation Area.

Great Somerford Conservation Area (designated heritage asset)
There is no appraisal or management plan currently published for the Great Somerford Conservation Area. However, by virtue of its designation, it is significant in heritage terms and this significance is likely to arise from its architectural (fortuitous) and historical (illustrative) value.

As noted in the GSNP, the rural street scenes of Great Somerford are considered an important part of its character and, therefore, its significance. The countryside setting in which the Conservation Area is experienced is considered to contribute positively to this significance, but new development in and around Broadfield Farm, some of which is currently under construction, has altered the border between the village and its countryside setting. However, it is considered this has had a neutral impact on the ability to appreciate its significance.

Great Somerford's heritage significance is considered to primarily comprise of its architectural (fortuitous) and its historic (illustrative) interest. This is recognised in its designation as Conservation Area and its setting is thought to contribute positively to its significance.

Impact on Setting and Significance
The NPPF (205) requires, when considering the impact of the development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, that "great weight" be given to the assets' conservation and that this weight be scaled relative to the importance of the asset. Any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, irrespective of whether it amounts to substantial, total loss or less than substantial harm, requires clear and convincing justification and to be outweighed by public benefits (205-208).

Where the proposed development would directly or indirectly affect a non-designated heritage asset, the NPPF (209) advises that a "balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset" (209).

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a statutory duty on the local planning authority for special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of a Conservation Area, but not its setting. Instead, however, the NPPF (206) states that the indirect impact on the significance of all designated heritage assets, through development within their setting, requires assessment.

The proposed extension, garage conversion and new garage will be identified in render, rather than faced in reconstituted stone to match the host dwelling. The pitched-roof garage, to be erected in the southwest corner of the residential curtilage of the host dwelling, will also be finished in render but the roof will be covered in concrete tiles to match the host dwelling. UPVC windows and doors are proposed on the dwelling and side-hung timber doors to the garage.

Render is not a finish currently found on the external surfaces of the host dwelling, but it is found at the neighbouring dwelling to the south and on buildings within the village. Although it will contrast with the existing stone facing of the application site, the areas to be rendered are in less visually sensitive locations and will not cause the building to compete for visual prominence in the street scene nor is it a finish out of character with the surrounding area.

The proposed ancillary garage is of a scale and design appropriate to its location and function. Although it will be easily visible within the public realm, particularly from the public footpath, it is not considered to have an overbearing presence or have a harmful impact on the character of the surrounding area.

The Council's Conservation Officer found that the proposal would have a neutral impact on the setting of Old Masons Arms and the Great Somerford Conservation Area. However, they suggested a condition be attached to any approval notice so that samples of the materials to be used in the development can be signed-off by this Council. In light of these comments, the applicant's agent provided details and samples of the proposed materials which are felt to match those on the submitted plans and considered acceptable.

It is considered that the design and materiality of the proposed rear extension, garage conversion and the erection of an ancillary garage will not have harmful impacts on the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the local area. The proposed development is considered to have a neutral impact on the setting of the Old Masons Arms and the Great Somerford Conservation Area and will result in no harm to their significance, where part of their significance stems from their setting.

The proposal is compliant with CP57, CP58 and the GSNP and does not conflict with the statutory duties under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The proposal can be supported, however a condition is recommended to ensure that the proposed materials are as stated and can be added to any approval notice. Such a condition is considered appropriate and necessary in this instance and to meet the relevant tests.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenities:
CP57 requires that development should ensure the impact on the amenities of existing occupants/neighbours is acceptable 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)". Residential amenity is affected by significant changes to the environment including privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and living areas within private gardens and this, therefore, needs to be carefully considered accordingly.

The application site occupies a corner plot, but it sits low in the street scene being a single-storey dwelling. It is overlooked to some degree from the north by the Old Masons Arms and from the east by 2 Broadfield Farm. To the south is 3 Broadfield Farm, which is currently screened from the application site by a thick hedgerow.

The rear extension will be flat-roofed and will project approximately 2.3m into the application sites' private amenity area. It will not overlook neighbours and it is not considered that the proposal will result in a significant loss of privacy for the dwellings' existing or future occupants. The ridge of the roof of the proposed garage may become visible from the south at No.3, but it is not felt to cause overshadowing due to the degree of separation and its northern siting.

No letters of representation were received from neighbours that would affect consideration of the proposal and it is not considered to have harmful impacts on residential amenity. The proposal is therefore in compliance with CP57 and is acceptable.

Access and Parking
CP64 states that the provision of car parking associated with well-designed new residential development will be based on minimum parking standards. The LTP defines the Council's minimum parking standards and states that the number of spaces required will depend on the number of bedrooms in a residential development. It also describes the minimum size requirement for a garage to be 6m x 3m (internal dimensions) to ensure that there is sufficient room for an average sized family car, a cycle, and some storage provision.

Wiltshire Council's Highways Engineer was consulted on this proposal and raised no objection to the development but commented that the internal dimensions of the proposed garage fall below the Council's minimum parking standards. Because of this, they have recommended a pre-commencement condition be attached to any approval notice to require details of secure covered storage for a cycle at the site be signed off by the Council. They also suggested an informative regarding section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 (obstructing public right of way).

Whilst the proposed garage is considered too small, based on the Council's parking standards, it is considered that it could accommodate one smaller vehicle, a cycle and offer some storage provision. As also considered in the Engineer's comments, the residential curtilage of the application site would be large enough to accommodate up to three cars for its four bedrooms, as also required by the minimum standards. It is therefore felt that a pre-commencement condition is not necessary in this case, but the suggested informative is deemed appropriate.

Although the proposed garage does not meet the minimum parking standards due to its size, it is considered that the application site provides for sufficient parking provision within its curtilage and the proposed new garage offers some additional small vehicle, cycle and storage provision. The proposal is therefore not found to be contrary to CP64.

Public Rights of Way
A public rights of Way, GSOM4 runs along the western boundary of the application. Given that the proposed extension, conversion works and detached garage would sit within the curtilage of the host dwelling, the proposal would not have any adverse impact on any users of the public footpath. An informative is however attached with the decision notice to advise the applicant that it is a criminal offence to obstruct a public right of way under Section 137 of the Highways Act 1980.

CONCLUSION:
The proposal is not considered to conflict with the statutory requirements, the national and local planning policies nor the Great Somerford (incorporating Startley) Neighbourhood Plan. The proposal would not result in harmful impacts to the residential character of the locality, to residential amenity nor to the historic environment. The proposal therefore can be supported.

It is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

Conditions: (5)

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:

Site Location Plan. 5577 03A. Received 1 December 2023.
Proposed Block Plan. 5577 53A. Received 1 December 2023.
Proposed Site Plan. 5577 51F Received 18 December 2023
Proposed Ground Floor Plan. 5577 50F. Received 18 December 2023.
Proposed New Garage. 5577 52C. Received 3 January 2024.
Materials sample list. Email. Received 3 January 2023.

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

3 The garage hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes incidental to the residential use of the main dwelling, known as 1 Broadfield Farm, Great Somerford, Chippenham, SN15 5EL, and it shall remain within the same planning unit as the main dwelling.

REASON: The additional accommodation is sited in a position where the Local Planning Authority, having regard to the reasonable standards of residential amenity, access, and planning policies pertaining to the area, would not permit a wholly separate dwelling.

4 The double roman concrete roof tiles to be used in the construction of the proposed garage

hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building in terms of their material, colour, texture, profile and pattern of laying. Development shall be maintained as such thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

5 The external walls of the proposed extension, converted accommodation and the detached garage hereby approved shall be finished with a through coloured render, ivory in colour, as stated in the materials sample list dated 3rd January 2024, and shall be maintained as such thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

Informatives: (4)

6 Any alterations to the approved plans, brought about by compliance with Building Regulations or any other reason must first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority before commencement of work.

7 The applicant is requested to note that this permission does not affect any private property rights and therefore does not authorise the carrying out of any work on land outside their control. If such works are required it will be necessary for the applicant to obtain the landowners consent before such works commence.

If you intend carrying out works in the vicinity of the site boundary, you are also advised that it may be expedient to seek your own advice with regard to the requirements of the Party Wall Act 1996.

8 The applicant should note that it is a criminal offence to obstruct a public right of way under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 and therefore no materials, plant, temporary structures or excavations of any kind should be deposited / undertaken which obstruct or adversely affect the public right of way MLAV9 whilst development takes place, without prior consultation with, and the further permission of, the highways authority at Wiltshire council.

9 The applicant should note that the grant of planning permission does not include any separate permission which may be needed to erect a structure in the vicinity of a public sewer. Such permission should be sought direct from Thames Water Utilities Ltd / Wessex Water Services Ltd. Buildings are not normally allowed within 3.0 metres

of a Public Sewer although this may vary depending on the size, depth, strategic importance, available access and the ground conditions appertaining to the sewer in question.