



PLANNING BY DESIGN

FROM CONCEPT TO COMPLETION

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Erection of new build 2-bedroom dwelling

**Land Adjacent to Telephone Exchange, Middle Stoke,
Limpley Stoke, Wiltshire (closest postcode BA2 7GF)**

Prepared by Planning By Design

On behalf of Christopher Foulkes

Introduction

Planning By Design (Agent) has been instructed to act on behalf of Christopher Foulkes (Applicant) to submit an outline planning application to Wiltshire Council (Local Planning Authority) for the proposed erection of a new build 2-bedroom dwelling at Land Adjacent to Telephone Exchange, Middle Stoke, Limpley Stoke, Wiltshire (closest postcode BA2 7GF) (the site).

In support of this application, the following Planning, Design and Access Statement has been constructed to demonstrate the suitability of this site for this proposal and evaluate its accordance with national and local planning policy along with supplementary design guidance.

Site Context

The site is a good size to support the proposal, accessible from Middle Stoke Road, it is located within the Limpley Stoke Village, where there is a cluster of housing and a village hall. Limpley Stoke is a small village, where development is limited to infill within the existing built area, provided it would not impose development in sensitive landscapes or consolidate an existing sporadic close-knit area of development.

The land appears to be surplus land that could be made effective use of (in accordance with national policy) and could be considered a suitable site for infill development.

The site has the following designations:

- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Special Landscape Area (SLA 7)
- Green Belt
- Community Area Partnership (Bradford on Avon)

Planning History

There has been one planning application submitted and refused on the land in 1996 for vehicular access and workshop/stable (ref. W/96/00016/OUT).

Proposed Development

Outline planning permission is sought for the erection of a self-build 2-bedroom bungalow-style dwelling house with a large curtilage at the site. The proposed dwelling would be detached and set back from the road, and minor in scale. There would also be a detached garage and driveway and footpath constructed at the site to give access from Middle Stoke Road.

The proposed site layout provides ample off-street parking for the dwelling, with abundant external amenity space in the form of a private garden.

Planning Policy

The following planning policy and guidance documents are recognised as material considerations for the assessment of this application.

- National Planning Policy Framework (2023)
- National Planning Practise Guidance
- Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)
- The Neighbourhood Plan (Freshford and Limpley Stoke)
- Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018-2023 (National Landscape)
- Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026: Car Parking Strategy (March 2015) West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration 2004, saved policy C3 - Special Landscape Area

Specific sections and policies:

National Planning Policy Framework (2023 – NPPF)

- Section 2: Achieving sustainable development,
- Section 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes,
- Section 11: Making effective use of land,
- Section 12: Achieving well-designed and beautiful places.
- Section 13: Protecting Green Belt Land
- Chapter 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015

- CP1: Settlement Strategy
- CP2: Delivery Strategy Core
- CP7: Spatial Strategy: Bradford on Avon Community Area
- CP41: Sustainable Construction and Low-Carbon Energy
- CP45: Meeting Wiltshire's Housing Needs
- CP50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- CP51: Landscape
- CP52: Green Infrastructure
- CP57: Ensuring High-Quality Design and Place Shaping
- CP60: Sustainable Transport
- CP61: Transport and Development
- CP62: Development Impacts on the Transport Network
- CP64: Demand Management

Planning Assessment

The main considerations of this application are the potential impact of the scheme on the

- Principle of development in the Green Belt
- Design and Visual Impact
- Impact on the Cotswolds National Landscape and Special Landscape Area
- Neighbouring Amenity
- Highways Impact
- Ecology
- Trees
- Land Stability

Principle of Development

The principle of development of this application is for outline planning permission for the erection of no.1 new self-build bungalow-style dwellinghouse at the site.

Policies CP1 and CP2 relate to the spatial strategy for Wilshire, setting the policy foundations for the promotion of sustainable development within the county. Policy CP7 defines Limpley Stoke as a small village, Policy CP1 states *“Small Villages have a low level of services and facilities, and few employment opportunities. Development at Large and Small Villages will be limited to that needed to help meet the housing needs of settlements and to improve employment opportunities, services and facilities”*. Policy CP2 states *“Small Villages development will be limited to infill within the existing built area”*.

The site is located within the Green Belt, paragraph 154 of the NPPF states that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate. Exceptions to this include: *“e) limited infilling in villages”* and *“g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.”* The site is located within the Limpley Stoke Village, where there is a cluster of housing and a village hall, to which the site is adjacent. The land does appear to be surplus land in close proximity to other built forms, that could be made effective use of (in accordance with national policy) as limited infill land within the Green Belt. The Neighbourhood Plan (Freshford and Limpley Stoke) defines infill as *“the filling of a gap normally capable of taking no more than two houses”*. Considering the site characteristics (and its topography), we consider the proposed location and siting could therefore be deemed infill, therefore the development complies with policies of the local, neighbourhood plan and national Green Belt policy.

Moreover, the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, but as they can demonstrate more than 4 years; the lack of supply (whilst it does not trigger assumption for sustainable development) shows the Council is in need of housing, which the proposal will provide. The self-build register also shows the Council has not been able to meet demand for the last three years. The last time they met their demand was 2018/19. Therefore, the proposed self-build dwelling for the use of the Applicant would comply with both the Council's

housing and self-build supply and could be advantageous to the proposal. The proposal, as infill development, will contribute to providing new market housing and contribute to a diverse housing mix in the area, whilst providing a modest amount of necessary housing within its Green Belt location (within settlement limits, adjacent to existing residential land uses) to serve the local need of the applicant who can show linkage to the area.

As the proposed dwelling will be of a suitable size and massing located adjacent to other built forms, with a suitable design expected, the nature or character of the area will not be altered by this proposed scheme. Moreover, it is not considered the proposed new dwelling would result in a material change that would produce a detrimental impact on the site or housing supply of the local area, or a detrimental impact upon the openness of the Green Belt, AONB landscape character or rural community. Given the above, the creation of the proposed dwelling house is therefore acceptable in principle in this case.

Design

Policy CP51 requires development to protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character. Policy CP57 requires high-quality design and place-shaping for all new developments and includes the expectation that proposals should make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire. Policy CP41 sets out sustainable construction and low-carbon energy requirements for new development.

The proposed dwelling will be of a suitable size and massing, with an appropriate and attractive design, which will correspond well to other built forms within the locality, including utilising matching style and materials. The nature or character of the area will not be detrimentally altered by this proposed scheme, especially given that the site is adjacent to other built developments. The proposed dwelling is also expected to be energy efficient and constructed from sustainable materials, the details of which can be secured at the reserved matters phase.

The siting of the dwelling also follows the building line and pattern of development in the area, and due to the topography of the site, the building will remain somewhat “hidden” from Middle Stoke, which is at a higher gradient than the lower part of the land.

Therefore, compliant with national and local planning policy, it is not considered the proposed new dwellings would result in a material change that would produce a detrimental impact on the site, AONB, local area or this section of the Green Belt in terms of its visual amenity. Further information about the design can be secured via the reserved matters phase.

Impact on the Cotswolds National Landscape and Special Landscape Area

The application site lies within the Cotswolds National Landscape and a Special Landscape Area therefore due consideration has to be given to any development that may adversely impact upon the scenic quality of the special landscape designations.

The NPPF states in paragraph 182 that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty, and the extent of development within AONBs and

National Parks should be limited. Core Policy 51 states *“great weight will be afforded to conserving and enhancing landscapes and scenic beauty”*. Saved Policy C3 requires the landscape character of this area to be *“conserved and enhanced and development will not be permitted which is considered to be detrimental to the high quality of these landscapes”*.

Policy CC1 of the Cotswold AONB Management Plan requires stakeholders across the Cotswolds AONB to take a more consistent approach to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB and increasing the understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities.

It is considered that the proposal, in line with policy, would not detrimentally impact the wider much-valued landscape character of the National Landscape and Special Landscape Areas, especially given the minor scale and sensitive nature of the proposal, and its compatibility with other built forms and pattern of development locally.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

Core Policy 57 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).

Neighbouring amenity is unlikely to be impacted significantly as the proposed dwelling is suitably scaled and distanced from neighbouring dwellings, and the proposed use of the site for a dwelling complies with local and national planning policies related to amenity. The nature of the proposal will not infringe upon surrounding uses by way of overshadowing, overlooking or overbearing, and ample green space will remain ensuring the proposal will not overdevelop the plot.

Given the existing residential use of the adjacent sites, and the infill/ surplus position of the application site within a village cluster, the character of the area will not be altered by the proposed usage. It is therefore unlikely the neighbouring amenity or the area character will be disrupted by way of noise disturbances, overlooking or overbearing.

The proposal also benefits from an adequate outdoor amenity space as it has reasonably sized front and rear gardens, where occupants can park and enjoy outdoor relaxation and recreation. It will also allow the occupant to inhabit an area in which he has a local connection. The proposal would therefore be in accordance with policies of the local, and national planning documents for amenity.

Highway Matters

It is not expected the proposal will cause a significant impact upon local highways or local traffic flow due to the small scale of the proposed dwelling. The proposed location within the village can also be accessed via active travel to nearby Freshford and onward public transport to other locations such as Bradford-Up-on-Avon, Trowbridge and Bristol.

The proposed access and parking arrangements can be considered safe and acceptable in line with the Council's guidelines for access and parking provision for residential developments. If required bicycle parking provision can be secured at the reserved matters phase too.

As such, the proposal can be considered compliant with the policies of the local development scheme and NPPF.

Justification for Development against Policies CP1, CP2 and CP45

Core Policy 1 defines Limpley Stoke as a Small Village, where development is limited to infill within the existing built-up area. The site forms part of an established residential cluster and does not extend beyond the village into open countryside. The proposal represents a logical and proportionate form of infill development that respects the scale and character of the settlement. It will contribute to sustainable development by making effective use of surplus land within the village, in accordance with national planning guidance promoting land efficiency.

Core Policy 2 reinforces that development within Small Villages must be limited to infill within the existing built area. The site comprises a small green space within the settlement that is surrounded by built development and is not an open, undeveloped countryside location. The proposal constitutes infill as defined in the supporting text of Core Policy 2, being the filling of a small gap within the village capable of accommodating only a single dwelling. The proposal also addresses local housing need, in compliance with the requirements of Core Policy 2, which directs that development in Small Villages should meet the housing demand of the settlement. This is especially the case with the Council's lack of housing land supply.

Core Policy 45 requires that new housing developments contribute to a mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet local needs. The proposal for a modest, single-storey self-build dwelling provides an additional housing option within the village. It supports the self-build register, which Wiltshire Council has struggled to meet in recent years. The development is appropriately scaled and designed to meet local housing demand without negatively impacting the surrounding built environment or infrastructure.

As the site is located within the Green Belt, national planning policy, as set out in paragraph 154(e) of the NPPF, establishes that limited infilling in villages is not inappropriate development. The proposal complies with this exception as it is located within a well-defined settlement boundary and is contained within a built-up area. The development will not impact the openness of the Green Belt, given its position within an established village cluster, and is in keeping with the character of the surrounding built environment. Additionally, the Freshford and Limpley Stoke Neighbourhood Plan defines infill as filling a gap capable of accommodating no more than two dwellings. The proposal for a single dwelling meets this definition and is therefore consistent with both national and local Green Belt policies.

The acceptability of development in the countryside is also an important policy consideration. While Core Policies 1 and 2 restrict development outside defined settlement limits, the proposal does not introduce an isolated dwelling in the countryside but rather integrates within the built fabric of the village. The site does not constitute open countryside and its

development will not create urban sprawl or disrupt the rural character of the area. Given that the Council has acknowledged the suitability of this site for limited infilling and does not consider it an encroachment into open countryside, the proposal is in accordance with both strategic and site-specific planning policies.

The proposed development satisfies the requirements of Core Policies 1, 2, and 45 by representing an appropriate and sustainable form of infill development that meets local housing needs while respecting the established settlement pattern. The proposal also qualifies as limited infill within the Green Belt under national planning policy and does not result in any adverse impact on the openness of the area. The site's location within the built-up part of the village further supports the acceptability of the development in planning terms, ensuring compliance with both local and national policy objectives.

Ecology and Biodiversity Matters

Policy CP50 and the NPPF requires the local planning authority (LPA) to ensure the protection of important habitats and species in relation to development and seeks enhancement for the benefit of biodiversity through the planning system.

Ecology

The attached Preliminary Ecological Survey concluded the following:

This Phase 1 Ecology Report confirms that the majority of the Construction Zone is of 'low ecological value' consisting primarily of bramble scrub and tall ruderal herb. The features of the highest ecological value within the development site are the old hazel coppices on site, which have moderate ecological value.

- *There are no Statutory or Non-Statutory Designated Nature Conservation Sites within or adjacent to the site.*
- *The Biological Data Search revealed the absence of protected species recorded within the site.*
- *There is no evidence of badger use of the site, though the topography and growth make it difficult to be certain and a range of precautions are recommended.*
- *The site is of low to moderate suitability for both reptiles and Great Crested Newts, therefore no further surveys are required, although a series of precautions should be taken during development, as detailed in section 4.3b.*
- *No further surveys are recommended*
- *Habitat creation for amphibians and reptiles is recommended.*
- *Supplementary planting with native species is recommended.*
- *Any site clearance should be undertaken outside of the peak bird breeding season (mid-March to mid-August) or undertaken under ecological supervision.*
- *There is no evidence of Non-Native Invasive Species on site.*

Trees

It is understood that whilst some trees will be removed to support the proposal, none of the trees are protected via Tree Preservation Orders or are situated within a Conservation Area. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) has been provided for the site by Brown Fisher Environmental LLP (247103ARB).

The AIA states:

“The 2no. Category B trees (Trees 1 and 2, off-site) will be retained, as will the Category C trees along the eastern boundary (Trees 7 and 9). In order to allow for the development, a total of 4no. Category C trees (Trees 3, 4, 5, 6) will be removed. A large dead/dying category U ash tree (T8) will also be removed. Dead trees often provide higher biodiversity value than living trees and are not excluded from the Metric.”

The results of the survey found:

“The tree stock comprises a number of large hazel coppices on the edges, mainly self-set sycamore and ash scrub and trees and one on-site ash tree (mature, failing), and an off-site tree whose roots fall within the Zone of Influence. In general, A and B category trees or hedges should be retained and carefully protected during any development work with appropriate root protection fencing.”

To prevent damage to the retained trees, the following can be ensured:

4.2.1 All trees that are being retained on site are to be protected by barriers and/or ground protection before any materials or machinery are brought onto the site, and before any demolition, development or stripping of soil commences. Where all activity can be excluded from the RPA, vertical barriers are to be erected to create a construction exclusion zone. The default barrier specification is to be in accordance with BS 5837:2012 ‘Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations’ as illustrated in Figure 3 below.

4.2.2 The protected area is to be regarded as sacrosanct, and, once installed, barriers and ground protection is not to be removed or altered without prior recommendation by the project arboriculturist and, where necessary, approval from the Local Planning Authority.

4.2.3 All-weather tree protection posters are to be securely fixed to the tree protection fencing in plain view.

The report also notes:

Consideration should be given to maintaining tree-lined boundary features, landscape impacts, habitat connectivity and reinforcing site boundaries. Further consideration should be given to the appearance of frontages and screening. It is recommended that compensation planting is undertaken and located to enable the landscape value of this area to be reinforced if any trees with landscape value are to be removed from the site.

In compensation for the loss of any of the existing trees, at least an equal number of native trees should be planted as part of the new development. The trees will be species that have wildlife benefits and are sympathetic both to the existing tree structure and suitable for their

likely eventual size limitation. All appropriate British Standards will be applied in terms of planting specifications. The location of the replacement trees should be determined in a detailed landscape design plan including location and species.

The above can be secured by condition if required and can be considered compliant with the planning policy.

Biodiversity Net Gain

A desktop survey of the site location found there are no designated sites or priority habitats within 500m of the site. Various SSSI's are in the site's vicinity, including Midford Valley Woods approximately 730 m North-West and Winsley Mines, 1300m East. The proposed development site lies within the impact risk zones for both these SSSI's.

The biodiversity Impact Assessment concluded:

"A Biodiversity Impact Assessment, using the DEFRA statutory small sites metric, was conducted for the proposed residential development of land adjacent to the telephone exchange, Middle Stoke, Limpley Stoke, Wiltshire, BA2 7GF.

The proposed development will result in a 0.8155 units (62.77%) loss, due to the net increase in the built environment and corresponding loss of vegetation predominantly moderate distinctiveness bramble scrub and trees. This does not meet the required 10% BNG. To achieve the mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain, an additional 0.9454 units are required."

The report states the requirement could be met following the following mechanisms:

- *A total of 4no. New (small) native trees will replace those lost on-site. In addition (and as shown in the Metric), it is proposed at this stage to introduce a further 2no. Medium trees at locations across the site (to be determined). These will provide some mitigation to the loss of the large ash tree on the site (albeit dead/dying).*
- *Shared space Enhancements: There is no shared space proposed therefore this option is not available.*
- *Rain gardens within private gardens*
- *Green roofs on buildings or reduce building footprints (the applicant would like to avoid this)*
- *Reduce hard surface area*
- *Where on-site mitigation cannot be achieved, off-site mitigation could help meet the required BNG. Any off-site mitigation will need to show the 0.9454 habitat unit gain +10% BNG for the mitigation site(s). The site could be within the ownership of the applicant or a third party however 30-year management plan for the site will be required and established through legal agreement.*
- *Where on-site and off-site mitigation is not available statutory credits can be purchased. The estimated cost would be £45,600 plus VAT."*

The proposal, provided the mitigation measures are met is compliant with national and local policies for biodiversity net gain and ecology. The Applicant is in favour of progressing the

statutory credit charge of circa £45k+, which keeps matters relatively simple and means the proposed credit charge supports the currently illustrated outline schematic.

Other Matters

Drainage / Flood Risk

Policy CP67 requires that all new development will include measures to reduce the rate of rainwater runoff and improve rainwater infiltration to soil and ground (sustainable urban drainage).

The dwelling site does not lie within an area of surface or groundwater flooding, and both foul and surface water drainage sewers run the full length of the site down the public footpath to the right of the site (the full length of the site's right-hand boundary). Therefore, connections to both foul and surface water public sewers can be made within feet of the site's boundary, and does not require a full assessment at outline stage. A drainage strategy could be secured by condition or during reserved matters phase, before commencement of development to ensure that no increase of flooding arises on the site and that the site can be adequately drained.

Planning Balance

Economically, the scheme supports a mix of housing locally and will economically benefit the local area, economy and housing market. Accommodation development not only provides an economic benefit to the Applicant, but the entire local economy benefits from money spent on accommodation, the jobs this provides, and money spent on local high streets and within local businesses by the occupants. Local builders and fitters will be sought following the receipt of planning permission.

Environmentally, the suitable proposal upon infill land, will not affect the character of the surrounding area, and will also not impact neighbouring amenity in a detrimental manner. The proposal will also appropriately protect and enhance biodiversity at the site and within the local area, as outlined above.

Socially, the scheme will provide a socially sustainable small-scale new dwelling to the locality and provide a new modern housing unit at the site for the Applicant. Likewise, this proposal will contribute to the continuation of the diversification of uses and housing mix within the area and the wider area it is situated within.

The proposed development will be in line with sustainable development and assist in delivering the housing objectives, and the proposal will maximise the effective use of the existing property/land by erecting no.1 housing unit. The siting and scale of the dwelling and associated development also preserve as much of the natural environment as possible to preserve the significance of the ANOB and Green Belt.

On balance and based on current policy the harm caused would not be significant enough to warrant a refusal in this instance.

Conclusion

The proposal presents an appropriate use and sustainable scheme that will not lead to any adverse impact on the nearby environment. The proposal is in line with local and national planning policy and guidance. The proposal will deliver significant social and economic benefits to the Applicant, and the local community, while not resulting in any detrimental harm to the surrounding area, neighbouring occupiers or local existing uses.

We kindly request that the Council support this application.