

Extension to dwelling comprising new first floor, single storey side and two storey side additions.

Fernlea, The Common, Minety, SN16 9RH

Planning Statement

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Document Information

About

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Statement has been prepared by Squires Planning in support of the Householder planning application by Edward Musselwhite at Fernlea, The Common, Minety seeking permission for:
- “Extension to dwelling comprising new first floor, single storey side and two storey side additions.”*
- 1.2. This document provides an overview of the site, its context and the proposed development before considering the material considerations relevant to the proposed development. It should be read alongside the following documents:
- Site Location Plan
 - Existing Block Plan
 - Existing Ground Floor Plan
 - Existing Elevations
 - Existing 3D View 1
 - Existing 3D View 2
 - Existing 3D View 3
 - Existing 3D View 4
 - Proposed Block Plan
 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan
 - Proposed First Floor Plan
 - Proposed Front and Rear Elevations
 - Proposed Side Elevations
 - Proposed Sections
 - Proposed 3D Views 1
 - Proposed 3D Views 2
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 - Proposed 3D Views 6
 - Proposed 3D Views 7
 - Proposed 3D Views 8

- Proposed 3D Views 9
- Proposed 3D Views 10
- Proposed 3D Views 11
- Ecological Survey Report (Bats) by BatCraft

The Site

- 1.3. The site is situated to the southwest of The Common, circa 1.11km southeast of Minety and 13.10km northwest of the centre of Swindon.
- 1.4. It comprises a single storey dwelling known as Fernlea, a front gravel parking area and two side gardens. The dwelling has a kitchen, lounge, utility room, two W/Cs, a bathroom and 4 bedrooms. It also has an attached garage. It's constructed of grey stonework with a plain tiled roof.
- 1.5. It is bordered to the northwest by a line of trees which run parallel to The Common, to the northeast by The Common, to the southeast by a rural road which serves a number of dwellings and farms, and to the southwest by an agricultural field.
- 1.6. The site is within the Environment Agency's Source Protection Zone 2c and adjacent to the Distillery Farm Meadows Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI). It is entirely within Flood Zone 1 and there are no designated heritage assets in proximity of the site.

Pre-application Advice

- 1.7. Prior to this householder application a pre-application submission (ENQ/2025/00915) was made for a *"Replacement dwelling and associated work."* The proposed replacement dwelling would have utilised the existing property but then included a two and a half storey new "main element". The officers pre-application response considered the replacement dwelling unacceptable, however it did state *"It is not the function of the LPA to design the scheme, but it may be acceptable to raise the roof of the current bungalow to the height proposed within this pre-application submission, provide a link to additional new development and have a similar building in mirror form. This may then break up the visual impact both in terms of height, scale and bulk and respond more positively to the shallow constraint of the site and its proximity to the highway."*
- 1.8. With the above advice in mind the applicant has now scaled back the proposal to be a householder extension. As set out in greater details in Section 2, the extension sees the creation of a first floor to the existing dwelling, a single storey flat roof side extension, and a two storey side extension with lower ridge height than the proposed first floor element to the existing.

Planning History

- 1.9. The relevant planning history of the site, and the surrounding area, is set out below.

Reference	Property	Description	Decision
N/93/00064/FUL	Fernlea, The Common	Proposed single storey extension and garage	Approved
N/06/02429/FUL	Derrycot, The Common	Erection of two storey dwelling with garage/store following demolition of existing dwelling and garage	Approved
13/06457/FUL	Derryfield Farm, The Common	Demolition of farm and outbuildings, erect new dwelling, garage and associated works	Approved
17/04125/FUL	Farfield Farm, Hornbury Hill	Demolition of existing chalet bungalow and erection of a traditional georgian style farmhouse. Extension to Residential Garden (Resubmission of 17/01634/FUL)	Approved
20/06539/FUL	Farfield Manor, Hornbury Hill	Construction of triple bay garage with room above	Approved

- 1.10. The site has a very limited history with only application N/93/00064/FUL being approved for a single storey extension and the addition of the garage.
- 1.11. A number of similar applications have been approved for large replacement dwellings in the area. This includes N/06/02429/FUL for a two storey replacement dwelling at Derrycot, and 17/04125/FUL and 20/06539/FUL at Farfield Manor (previously Farfield Farm) to replace a bungalow with a 2.5 storey dwelling and a triple bay garage with a room above. Application 13/06457/FUL was also approved at Derryfield Farm to replace agricultural buildings with a new dwelling. These permissions will be discussed in further depth throughout this statement but they show that existing, smaller dwellings, in the locality of the application site, have now been significantly altered.

2. Proposed Development

- 2.1. The application seeks permission for *“Extension to dwelling comprising new first floor, single storey side and two storey side additions.”* The extensions include:
- A first floor (upward) extension to the existing dwelling;
 - A single storey side extension (southeast elevation) comprising a flat roof with two roof lanterns;
 - A two storey side extension (northwest elevation) with a lower ridge than the proposed upward extension, comprising a pitched roof and gable projection.
- 2.2. Additionally, the proposals include changes to existing fenestration, and externally facing materials. The proposed elevations will be a recon stone (Bekstone Structural Walling Blocks - Cotswold Natural Light Weathered Building Blocks - Tumbled Reconstituted Stone) with small areas of timber boarding (above main entrance) together with a tiled roof (Cotswold style roof tile).
- 2.3. Internally, the ground floor will comprise a large kitchen/diner, utility room, boot room, and shower room in the area of the existing dwelling and the single storey side extension. Within the two storey side extension, at ground floor level, there will be a study, lounge and cinema room. At first floor level there will be a large master suite (with dressing room, snug and en-suite), together with 5 bedrooms (all en-suite) and a family bathroom.
- 2.4. The dwelling would be served by an existing access but the associated works include replacing the existing driveway. Additional landscaping can be provided in the formal proposal if deemed necessary.

3. Planning Policy

- 3.1. Planning decisions should be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 3.2. In this case, the adopted development plan consists of:
- Wiltshire Core Strategy
 - Saved Policies from:
 - North Wiltshire Local Plan
 - West Wiltshire District Plan and Leisure and Recreation DPD
 - Kennet Local Plan
 - Salisbury District Local Plan
 - Chippenham Site Allocations Plan
 - Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan
 - Neighbourhood Plans
 - Minerals and Waste Plans
- 3.3. Policy contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in February 2025 is also material in the determination of this application, along with relevant adopted Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance.
- 3.4. The emerging Wiltshire Local Plan 2020-2038 is being prepared and was submitted for examination on the 28th November 2024. On 19th November 2025 the examining Inspector wrote to the Council to inform them that the scheduled hearing sessions would need to be postponed with currently no date in place for rearranged dates. Given its stage of preparation, its policies hold limited weight and have therefore been considered in this statement.
- 3.5. The most relevant policies in the development plan, the emerging Local Plan and national policy are set out below.

Wiltshire Core Strategy

- 3.6. Details of Local Plan. Then list relevant policies with brief description
- 3.7. **Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity** states that '*Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale*'. It also requires development to incorporate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance to sensitive wildlife species and habitats. Development must also explore opportunities to enhance biodiversity and avoid direct and indirect impacts on local wildlife sites.

- 3.8. **Core Policy 51: Landscape** highlights that *‘Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures’*. It also requires development to have regard for the relevant Landscape Character Assessment and comply with 9 criteria.
- 3.9. **Core Policy 57: Ensuring high quality design and place shaping** requires a high standard of design and that proposals comply with 14 design related criteria.

North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 (Saved Policies)

- 3.10. **Policy NE14: Trees, site features and the control of new development** states that *‘Permission will not be granted for proposals that would result, or be likely to result, in the loss of trees, hedges, lakes/ponds or other important landscape or ecological features that could be successfully incorporated into the design of a development’*.

Wiltshire Local Plan Pre-Submission Draft 2020-2038 (Regulation 19)

- 3.11. **Policy 88: Biodiversity and geodiversity** builds on Core Policy 50 of the Core Strategy. It requires development to demonstrate how the mitigation hierarchy has been sequentially applied, and how it protects features of nature conservation value. It states that *‘All development proposals shall incorporate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats’*.
- 3.12. **Policy 91: Conserving and enhancing Wiltshire’s landscapes** seeks to update Core Policy 51 of the Core Strategy and requires development to conserve and where possible enhance Wiltshire’s landscapes by complying with 8 criteria.
- 3.13. **Policy 98: Ensuring high quality design and place shaping** builds on Core Policy 57 of the Core Strategy and requires a high standard of design for all new development, by complying with 13 criteria.

Other Material Policy/Guidance Documents

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.14. The NPPF is the overarching national policy framework for England. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans can provide for housing and other development in a sustainable matter. As set out in paragraph 2, the NPPF must be taken into account in preparing the development plan and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 3.15. Paragraph 8 sets out the objectives for sustainable development. These are:
- a) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right

time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure

- b) a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.
- c) an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

- 3.16. Paragraph 135(c) of the NPPF requires that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments *'are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting'*.

Wiltshire Design Guide

- 3.17. The Wiltshire Design Guide was adopted in March 2024 and provides design guidance to various forms of development. Of particular relevance here is Appendix D of the Design Guide, which relates to Householder extensions.
- 3.18. Appendix D notes that a "dedicated" Householder Design Guide, with illustrations, is being considered but at time of writing none has been produced.
- 3.19. The guidance covers Form, Windows, Details and Plot, providing bullet point guidance under each.

4. Main Considerations

4.1. In this section we will consider the main issues relevant to the proposal, having regard to the proposed development, site location, planning history and relevant planning policies. The main issues to be covered are:

- Principle of development
- Design and Impact on the Character of the Area
- Access, Highways and Parking
- Landscape Impact
- Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

Principle of development

- 4.2. The proposal comprises an extension to the existing dwelling. It seeks to provide for an appropriate dwelling, having respect for the local context and wider built form.
- 4.3. There is no specific policy that relates to the provision of house extensions. Nevertheless, as an existing property which is in use, the principle of extending is wholly acceptable. It is possible for the dwelling to extend and in deed erect outbuildings under permitted development. This again reinforces the acceptability of the extensions in principle.

Design, Amenity and impact on the character of the area

- 4.4. Design considerations are covered by policy Core Policy 57. The limited guidance provided by Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide is also a consideration.
- 4.5. The proposed extensions, whilst large and clearly transformative, respect the general form of the existing dwelling through the provision of appropriate pitched roofs, general layout and gable projections. Further, the use of high quality facing materials and appropriate fenestration ensure that the extensions will result in a well designed, appropriate dwelling.
- 4.6. The existing dwelling is overly small for its plot and uncharacteristic of the wider built form which generally consists of a mix of dwellings and agricultural or commercial sites situated on either side of The Common. The agricultural and commercial buildings in the area are constructed of a mixture of metal sheeting and timber. The dwellings are typically detached, 2 or 3 storeys tall and constructed of a mix of render, stonework and brick. The developed plots are separated by agricultural and other undeveloped land. The dwellings are typically large and large plots.
- 4.7. As described, the existing dwelling is single storey and constructed of stonework. Whilst the materials reflect those used elsewhere, it is one of very few single storey dwellings in the area and it situated on a comparably large plot compared to the other dwellings in the area.

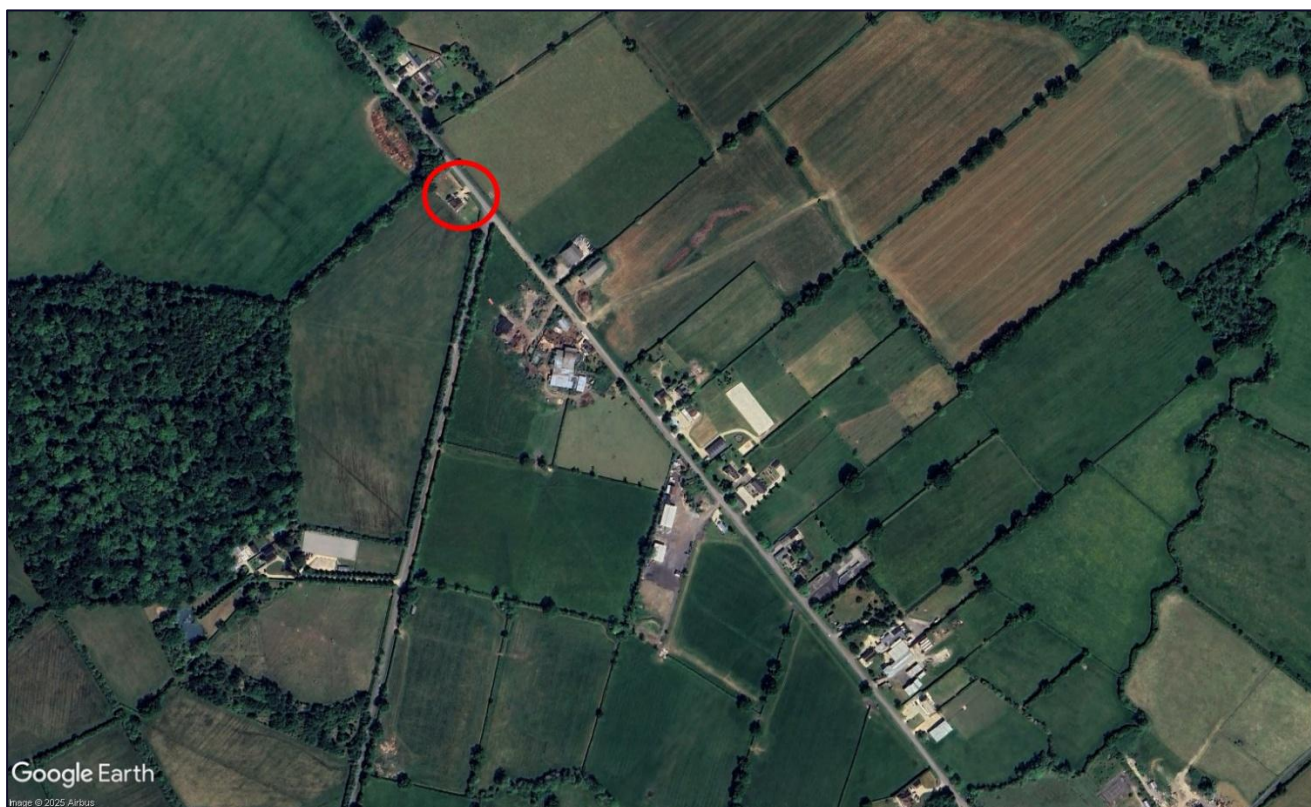


Figure 1 - Fernlea (circled in red) compared to the other plots along The Common

- 4.8. As **Error! Reference source not found.**1 displays, there are a number of sites along The Common which comprise large residential and non-residential plots with large dwellings. This is a common theme amongst the rural surroundings of the site such as the dwellings shown in Figures 2-4. The dwelling is far smaller than those which positively contribute to the character of the area. The existing dwelling therefore has a negative impact on the character of the area.
- 4.9. The development proposed in this application would bring the dwelling in line with this existing built form whilst still respecting the rural nature of the general locality. The size of the plot is also more than sufficient to accommodate a larger dwelling whilst also retaining an excellent sized garden. The upward extension of the existing dwelling would provide the main focal point having the highest ridge line, albeit a standard two storey height. The two storey side extension would have a lower ridge to this. This will provide some visual separation between the two elements
- 4.10. Regarding materials, stonework (Bekstone Structural Walling Blocks - Cotswold Natural Light Weathered Building Blocks - Tumbled Reconstituted Stone) will be used for the extensions and on the existing parts of the property. This will reflect the appearance of the existing dwelling which also uses it. The use of timber cladding is minor but adds further interest to the elevations. The use of the two materials is therefore appropriate.
- 4.11. The proposal is therefore of an appropriate design which will better reflect the characteristics of the area, in comparison to the existing dwelling. It will therefore be *'responding 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'* in accordance with Core Policy 57 of the Core Strategy and *'responding*

positively to the existing townscape and landscape in terms of the distinctive local characteristics of the built form' in accordance with Policy 98 of the emerging Local Plan.

- 4.12. Regarding amenity, as shown in **Error! Reference source not found.**1, there are no dwellings directly adjacent to the site. There would therefore be no risk of any overlooking and loss of privacy for existing or future occupants of the site or neighbouring land, and no impacts from overbearing or loss of light. The previous pre-application also confirmed that amenity impacts were not an issue, stating *"There are no directly adjacent properties, and it is not considered that residential amenity would be adversely impacted above and beyond the existing situation enjoyed by residents. Furthermore, the proposed development would provide for an acceptable level of residential amenity for future occupants of any extended dwelling on the site."*
- 4.13. Turning to the impact on the character of the area, as described it is rural in nature and is characterised by a mix of detached 2 or 3 storey dwellings on large plots which are typical for the rural location, alongside a number of agricultural or commercial sites situated on either side of The Common. The dwellings are typically set back from The Common by driveways. Each of the properties along The Common are separated by agricultural land and other undeveloped parcels. Examples of the dwellings in the surrounding area are shown in Figures 2-4.



Figure 2 - Derrycot, The Common



Figure 3 - Derryfield Farm, The Common



Figure 4 - Farfield Manor, Hornbury Hill

- 4.14. The existing dwelling in contrast is single storey and situated on a large plot with two large side gardens as shown in Figures 5 and 6.



Figure 5 - View of the site from the western boundary



Figure 6 - View of the site from the eastern boundary

- 4.15. As a result of this, the dwelling appears unnaturally small on the plot. A dwelling of this size and nature, in comparison to the other larger dwellings on large plots such as this, is not in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.
- 4.16. The development would provide a significantly more attractive dwelling that is of a commensurate scale as the other dwellings which positively contribute to the character of the area. The proposed dwelling would be a maximum of two storeys and constructed of a mix of stonework which reflects the appearance of the existing dwelling. The proposed dwelling on the large plot, will be far more in keeping with the character of the area in comparison to the existing dwelling.
- 4.17. This proposal is acceptable in design, amenity and character terms and thus is consistent with the relevant policies of the Development Plan.

Access, Highways & Parking

- 4.18. The site will utilise the existing access onto The Common which is safe and suitable to serve the proposed dwelling.
- 4.19. The existing dwelling has 4 bedrooms and the proposed dwelling would have 6 bedrooms. The increase in bedrooms would result in a negligible increase in trip generations to and from the site, and a negligible impact on the highways network.
- 4.20. Regarding parking, whilst the existing garage would be removed, a new parking area would be provided as part of the driveway which would provide sufficient parking to serve the dwelling.

Landscape Impact

- 4.21. Regarding landscape impacts, the landscape character comprises mainly flat, agricultural land interspersed by rural roads lined with trees and hedgerows. There are also pockets of woodland scattered between the agricultural fields. Most of the dwellings and agricultural/commercial sites are tucked in close to the rural roads but some have long driveways. The site is within Character Area 2: Thames Valley Lowland designated in the North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment. The main characteristics include low, level or undulating ground, wetland features, continuous hedges with many mature oak and ash trees, varying field sizes and dispersed or nuclear settlements. Views are generally contained. The stated management guidelines include conserving and enhancing wetland, hedgerows, and mature trees. It also seeks to ensure that development reinforces the locally distinctive character and respects the vernacular, and discourage development which would detract from the tranquil rural character.
- 4.22. In this case, the proposal would utilise stonework, which would reflect the appearance of the existing dwelling, and whilst resulting in a larger dwelling, this is more consistent with the wider built form. The proposal would therefore reinforce locally distinctive character. As an extended dwelling, it would also have a negligible impact on the tranquillity of the area.
- 4.23. The only publicly accessible viewpoint of the site is from The Common. There is existing screening along The Common which means that the dwelling can only be seen from the breakage in the hedgerow at the access. The indicative Proposed Block Plan shows that the existing dwelling which

would be incorporated into the scheme will remain visible from the access, however tree planting is shown between the new part of the proposed dwelling and The Common to ensure that any views of this part of the proposed dwelling will be well screened from the access and The Common. The viewpoint from the access will therefore remain mainly unaltered.

- 4.24. The proposal therefore has been '*informed by and sympathetic to the distinctive character areas identified in the relevant Landscape Character Assessment*' in accordance with Core Policy 51 and will be '*conserving, enhancing, and restoring the characteristics and views of landscapes*' in accordance with Policy 91 of the emerging Local Plan.

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

- 4.25. An Ecological Survey Report produced by BatCraft has been submitted with this application. Both the main dwelling and garage were assessed for their potential to provide bat roosts. The report concludes for both elements "*that it is not being or been used by bats, there is no evidence either recent or historic to suggest that it has. There is negligible access opportunities or potential for roosting bats within the building, based on recommendations in the Bat Workers Manual and the Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines, no further survey effort is required.*"
- 4.26. Regarding Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), the development would qualify for an exemption as it is a householder application meeting the definition provided by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, namely "*an application for planning permission for development for an existing dwellinghouse, or development within the curtilage of such a dwellinghouse for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse.*"

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. This document has been prepared in support of the Householder planning application for *“Extension to dwelling comprising new first floor, single storey side and two storey side additions.”*
- 5.2. The proposed extensions are acceptable in principle. They are of an appropriate design that ensures that the existing character and appearance of the locality is maintained. Further, the resultant dwelling will be in keeping with the wider built form and appropriate in term so landscape impact. The proposal will not result in any harmful amenity impacts and further will not cause any impacts on protected species.
- 5.3. Consequently, the proposal complies with the NPPF and Wiltshire Core Strategy, and therefore, it is requested that planning permission be granted.



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