

Planning and Heritage Statement



December
2025

Buildings, Palmers Close, Hilperton, BA17 4QQ

The conversion of existing stable and erection of a new building to form a self-build dwelling.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	3
2.	RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY	4
3.	DETAILS OF PROPOSALS.....	4
4.	PLANNING POLICY	6
	<i>Wiltshire Core Strategy (January 2015).....</i>	<i>7</i>
	<i>Hilperton Neighbourhood Plan.....</i>	<i>8</i>
	<i>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).....</i>	<i>8</i>
5.	PLANNING ASSESSMENT.....	11
	<i>Principle of development.....</i>	<i>11</i>
	<i>Housing Land Supply Position.....</i>	<i>12</i>
	<i>Character and appearance</i>	<i>14</i>
	<i>Residential amenity.....</i>	<i>19</i>
	<i>Ecological Implications</i>	<i>22</i>
	<i>Highway safety implications.....</i>	<i>24</i>
	<i>Arboricultural Matters.....</i>	<i>25</i>
6.	PLANNING BENEFITS.....	25
7.	CONCLUSION AND PLANNING BALANCE.....	26

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Context Planning Ltd have been instructed by Doric Developments, the site owner, to submit a planning application for the conversion of the former stables and erection of a connecting building to form a self-build dwelling at land off Trowbridge Road, Hilperton.
- 1.2. The site comprises a stable building, which has been adapted and altered in various ways over the years. There is also an open-fronted barn-style structure, and together these buildings enclose a small courtyard area. The barns subject to this application form part of Palmers Close and were previously used in association with this property and its large grounds. The site benefits from an existing vehicular access from Palmers Close, which itself is situated off Trowbridge Road.
- 1.3. The site lies within the development limits of Hilperton, close to local services, facilities and public transport connections. No specific heritage or landscape designation covers the site, but it lies adjacent to the Hilperton Conservation Area, and to a pair of cottages (116/117 Trowbridge Road) which are Grade II Listed. Whilst there are no trees within the site itself, there are a number of Tree Preservation Orders located close to the application site.
- 1.4. The site is set back by approximately 20 metres from Trowbridge Road behind a neighbouring residential garden. There is residential development to the north, with the grounds of Palmers Close to the south and east. The mature boundary vegetation helps screen views from the surrounding area, particularly from the Conservation Area.



Figure.1 – Site location Plan

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1. There is no planning history directly relevant to this application.

3. DETAILS OF PROPOSALS

- 3.1. The application seeks permission for a self-build dwelling which is formed by converting the existing stable building, and the erection of a single-storey extension to the south, linking to a two-storey extension running along the southern boundary of the site. The open fronted barn will be demolished to facilitate the development. The layout has been designed around a private courtyard garden, with the main living spaces facing onto this area.

Figure.2 – Proposed block plan

- 3.2. The barn roof will be reinstated to match the existing pitch, with similar roof tiles used to maintain a coherent appearance. The existing rubble stone walls of the stable barn will be retained and repaired as required. All new external walls of the extension/new builds will be finished in matching rubble stone to ensure the extensions integrate successfully with the existing stable structure.
- 3.3. Parking for two vehicles will be provided within the double garage, with additional parking available on the driveway to the front. The garage will include secure bicycle storage and an electric vehicle charging point. The existing vehicular access will be retained, and the frontage will be enhanced with new hedgerow planting. Existing hedgerows along the access road will also be maintained.
- 3.4. The proposed garden areas will be landscaped with new lawns and hedgerow planting along the eastern and northern boundaries to provide screening to the neighbouring dwellings. Two new trees will be planted in the northern corner. Paved areas will create usable outdoor spaces for seating and general amenity use. New boundary walls are

proposed along the eastern and northern edges, with existing timber fencing retained where suitable.



Figure.3 – Proposed visuals

4. PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1. Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that, in dealing with proposals for planning permission, regard must be had to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides that, if regard is to be had to the development plan for any determination, then that determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2. The parts of the Statutory Development Plan which are of most relevance to this proposal includes the Wiltshire Core Strategy (CS) (adopted in January 2015), Saved Policies of West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration 2004 and the Hilperton Neighbourhood Plan.

-
- 4.3. The NPPF (2024) forms a significant material consideration, particularly in understanding the weight that should be attached to policy and whether policy can be considered up-to-date. The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides additional clarification as to the Government's planning policy approach and in places is relevant to this submission.

Wiltshire Core Strategy (January 2015)

- 4.4. Wiltshire Council formally adopted the Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document in January 2015.
- 4.5. Core Strategy Core Policy (CP1) sets out the settlement strategy for Wiltshire, identifying four tiers of settlements (Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large and Small Villages). Hilperton is defined as 'a Large Village' where development is encouraged. CP2 explains that within the limits of development, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages.
- 4.6. Core Policy 29 outlines the spatial strategy for the Trowbridge Community Area which envisages the provision of approximately 7000 homes. Hilperton is identified as a Large Village within this policy.
- 4.7. Policy CP51 (landscape) states that "development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character". Locally distinctive natural features, the character of settlements and their landscaped setting will be conserved and enhanced. Important views and visual amenity will be protected.
- 4.8. Policy CP57 (Ensuring high quality design and place shaping) requires new developments to make efficient use of land whilst taking account of characteristics of the site and having regard to the compatibility of adjoining buildings and uses, to ensure that appropriate levels of visual and residential amenity are achievable within a

development. A high standard of design is required in all new developments. Development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality.

- 4.9. Core Policy 58 requires that development should conserve and where possible enhance the significance of design- and non-designated heritage assets, their settings and the historic environment more broadly.
- 4.10. Core Policy CP60 (Sustainable Transport) seeks to direct development to accessible locations and promote the use of sustainable transport modes.
- 4.11. CP61 (Transport and New Development) ensures that development proposals achieve a suitable connection to the highway that is safe for all road users, and that appropriate levels of parking are provided within the site. Policy CP64 (Demand Management) and LTP3 Car Parking Strategy adopted by the council in February 2011 includes residential parking standards (see table 7.1, page 27), which sets out the minimum parking requirements for new residential development.

Hilpertown Neighbourhood Plan

- 4.12. The Hilpertown Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is an important material consideration in decision-making process. According to the NP, its broad aim is to take forward, interpret and add detail to the above policy framework in ways that have community support. This will add certainty for both developers and the local community and ensure that the development encouraged by the NDP will be sustainable. Perhaps the greatest challenge for Hilpertown will be to grow sustainably and to continue to benefit from close links with Trowbridge but at the same time to preserve a separate, distinctly 'village' identity

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.13. Paragraph 39 of the NPPF advises that 'Local Planning Authorities (LPA) should approach decision-making on proposed development in a positive and creative way...and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible'.
- 4.14. Paragraph 10 advises 'so that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development'. Paragraph 11 outlines how the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking is to be implemented. For decision taking this means 'approving development proposals which accord with an up-to-date Development plan without delay'.
- 4.15. Alternatively, where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.
- 4.16. Footnote 7 clarifies that the policies referred to above are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites

listed in paragraph 181) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

- 4.17. Paragraph 61 makes clear that ‘to support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed’.
- 4.18. Paragraph 63 explains that variety of sizes, types and tenures of housing are needed for different groups in the community. This should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes).
- 4.19. In respect of transport, paragraph 115 advises that it should be ensured that ‘safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users’. Paragraph 116 advises that ‘development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe’.
- 4.20. Paragraph 124 advises that ‘planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses’. Paragraph 125 explains that give substantial weight must be given to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, proposals for which should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;

-
- 4.21. Paragraph 135 requires proposals to function well over their lifetime, be visually attractive, and use good architecture, layout and landscaping. Development should respect local character and history, create a strong sense of place, and make the best use of the site, including providing an appropriate mix of uses and supporting local facilities and transport networks. Proposals must also create safe, inclusive and accessible environments that promote health and wellbeing, offer a high level of amenity for all users, and do not give rise to crime, the fear of crime, or harm to community cohesion.
- 4.22. Paragraph 232, in respect of implementation of the NPPF and existing policies, guides that 'due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)'.

5. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of development

- 5.1. 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.
- 5.2. The Settlement Strategy outlined in the Core Policy 1 of Wiltshire Core Strategy identifies four tiers of settlements, namely:
- Principal Settlements
 - Market Towns
 - Local Service Centres
 - Large and Small Villages
- 5.3. Core Policy 22 of Wiltshire Core Strategy identifies Hilperton as a large village in the

Trowbridge Community Area. Core Policy 2 (CP2) deals with the delivery strategy explaining that *‘within the limits of development, as defined on the policies map, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the Principal Settlements, Market Towns, Local Service Centres and Large Villages’*.

- 5.4. The application site lies within the development limits of Hilpertown, and residential development is therefore in full accordance with the delivery strategy which seeks to direct new residential development to the most sustainable locations. Importantly, as this is within the development limits, there is no requirements for new residential development to be restricted to conversions. The principle of development must therefore be supported.
- 5.5. The importance of developing brownfield land is highlighted in paragraph 125 of the Framework, which explains that the decision maker must give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, proposals for which should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused. As the development site is brownfield land, and within the settlement of Hilpertown, substantial weight must be given to the benefits of the development.

Housing Land Supply Position

- 5.6. Whilst the development must be supported in principle, the housing land supply is still an important material consideration. Wiltshire Council have issued a briefing note to explain the implications of the December 2024 revisions to the NPPF which included amendments to calculating the standard method for housing need; the terms under which a buffer should be added to the housing requirement to be used in the housing land supply calculation; and the implications of not being able to meet a sufficient deliverable housing land supply. The briefing note also addresses the revisions to the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) including the standard methodology for assessing and setting Local Housing Need.
- 5.7. The number of homes per annum required under the previous local housing need

calculation was 1917, and this has increased to 3525 under the revised housing need calculation. This represents an 84% increase. Wiltshire Council must now demonstrate a five-year housing land supply (rather than four years), including a 5% buffer, and immediately apply the revised Local Housing Need figure for decision-making. According to the updated calculations, the Council is unable to demonstrate the required five-year housing land supply (plus buffer), with only a 2.03-year housing land supply identified.

- 5.8. The Council acknowledges this is a significant shortfall and emphasises that the weight given to the benefits of housing in planning decisions has now increased. Furthermore, the Council highlights that the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be viewed in the context of the national objective to boost housing land supply.
- 5.9. Under the NPPF's transitional arrangements, the Local Plan submitted by Wiltshire Council for Examination will be assessed under the relevant previous version of the NPPF. The council must however be able to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply at the point of adoption assessed against the housing requirement in the emerging Local Plan. It is to be noted there remain many unresolved objections to the emerging plan's housing figures which are disputed.
- 5.10. Upon adoption of the Local Plan, the five-year housing land supply will be assessed against the housing requirement in the plan for a period of up to five years from adoption. However, the NPPF directs that for authorities whose adopted housing requirement is substantially less than the revised Local Housing Need figure, they will be required to add a 20% buffer to their five-year housing requirement from 1 July 2026 and need to immediately begin work on a new plan to meet the local housing need figure.
- 5.11. The Council recognise that to meet this increased buffer, they will need to continue to approve planning applications to ensure a sufficient housing land supply can continue to be met. It is important therefore, that development such as that proposed, are assessed in this context.

Character and appearance

- 5.12. Core Policy 57 requires a high standard of design in all development which is complementary to the locality through drawing on the local context. Proposals are required to demonstrate how they make a positive contribution to the character of the area. Core Policy 58 requires that development should conserve and where possible enhance the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets, their settings and the historic environment more broadly.
- 5.13. A Design and Access Statement (DAS) prepared by TEA architecture, outlines the rationale behind the proposed layout, scale, design, materials sustainability strategy and access arrangements and demonstrates how the development contributes positively to the character and quality of Hilperton. The scheme has been informed and shaped by the guidance set out in the Hilperton Design Statement and by the character analysis within the Hilperton Character Appraisal.
- 5.14. The buildings are set adjacent to a pair of cottages (116/117 Trowbridge Road also known as Willow Cottage and Old Forge Cottage) which are Grade II listed (thought to formally be an inn and then smithy). The site is also directly adjacent to the Conservation Area (hatched blue in below extract).

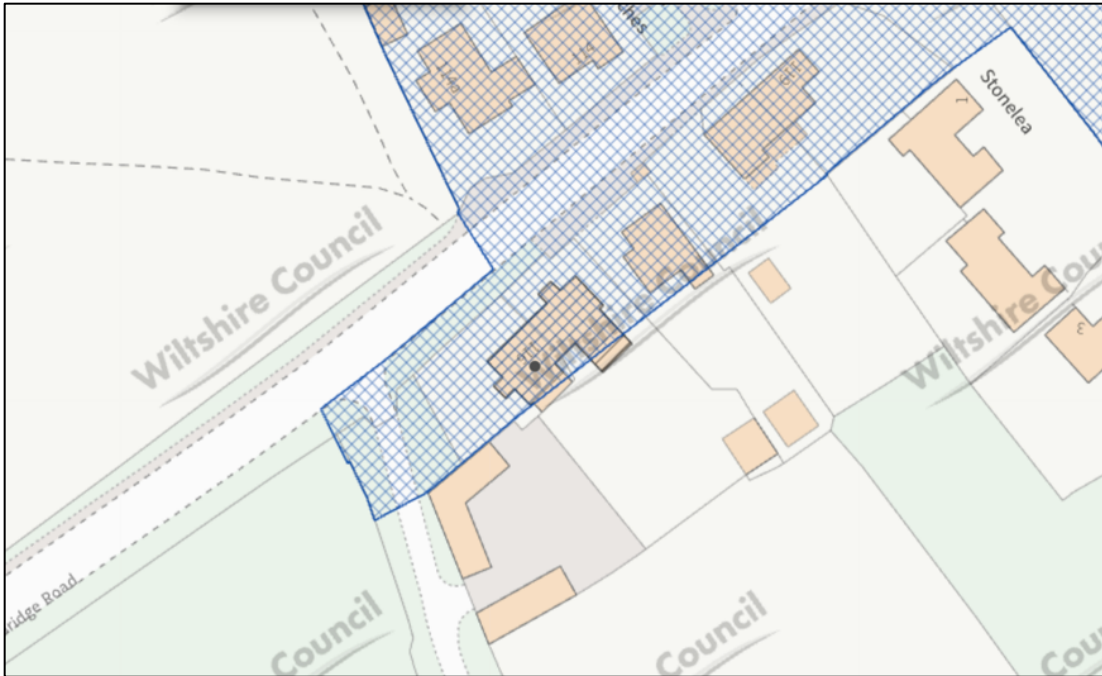


Figure.4 – Location of site adjacent to Conservation Area (blue hatching)

- 5.15. Although the buildings on the application site are not listed buildings, it is recognised that the main stable building may be of some heritage significance. A building of a slightly larger footprint (alongside other outbuildings) appeared on the 1894 – 1903 OS Map (see Figure 5) and are identified as old Smithy buildings. This building has however been significantly altered over time, with much of it being rebuilt, reducing its heritage value.

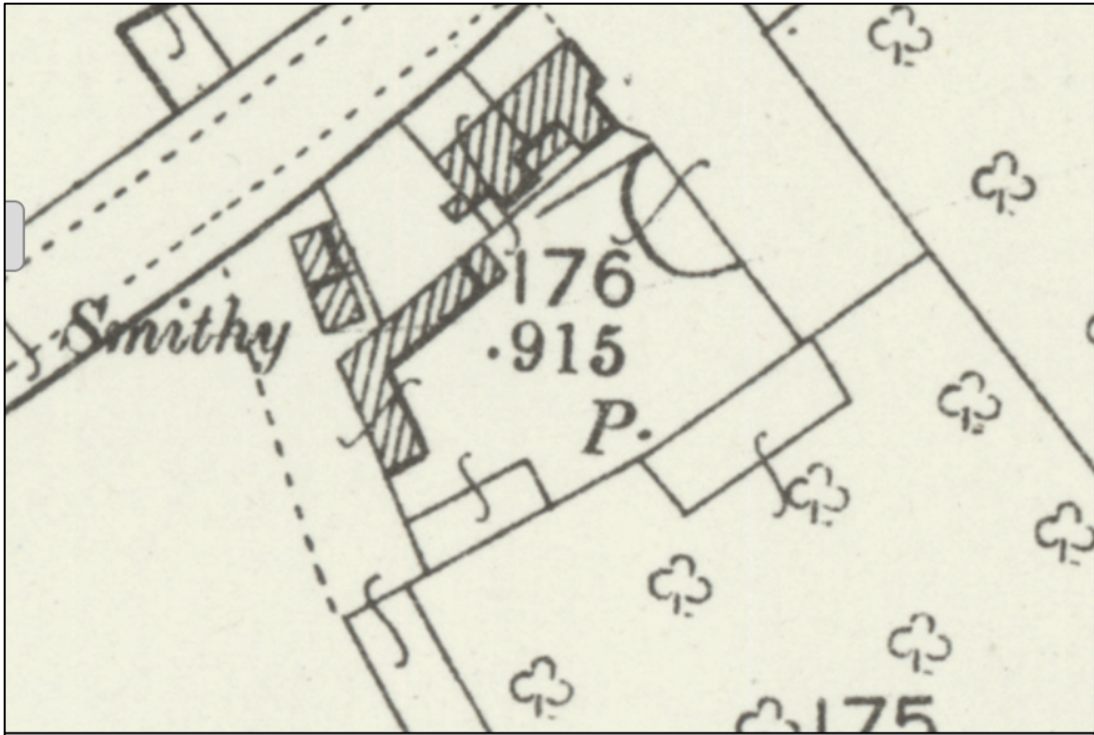


Fig 5 – OS 1894 – 1903 OS Map

- 5.16. The Hilpertons Character Appraisal also notes a building in this location as a locally important structure (see Figure 6), although it is possible that this relates to a building that was once on the site as this does not follow the line of the existing buildings. The Character Appraisal briefly mentions outbuildings alongside the listed buildings adjacent.. *‘Willow Cottage and Old Forge Cottage and sit opposite. Outbuildings are marked as “smithy” on a map based on surveys c1880.*

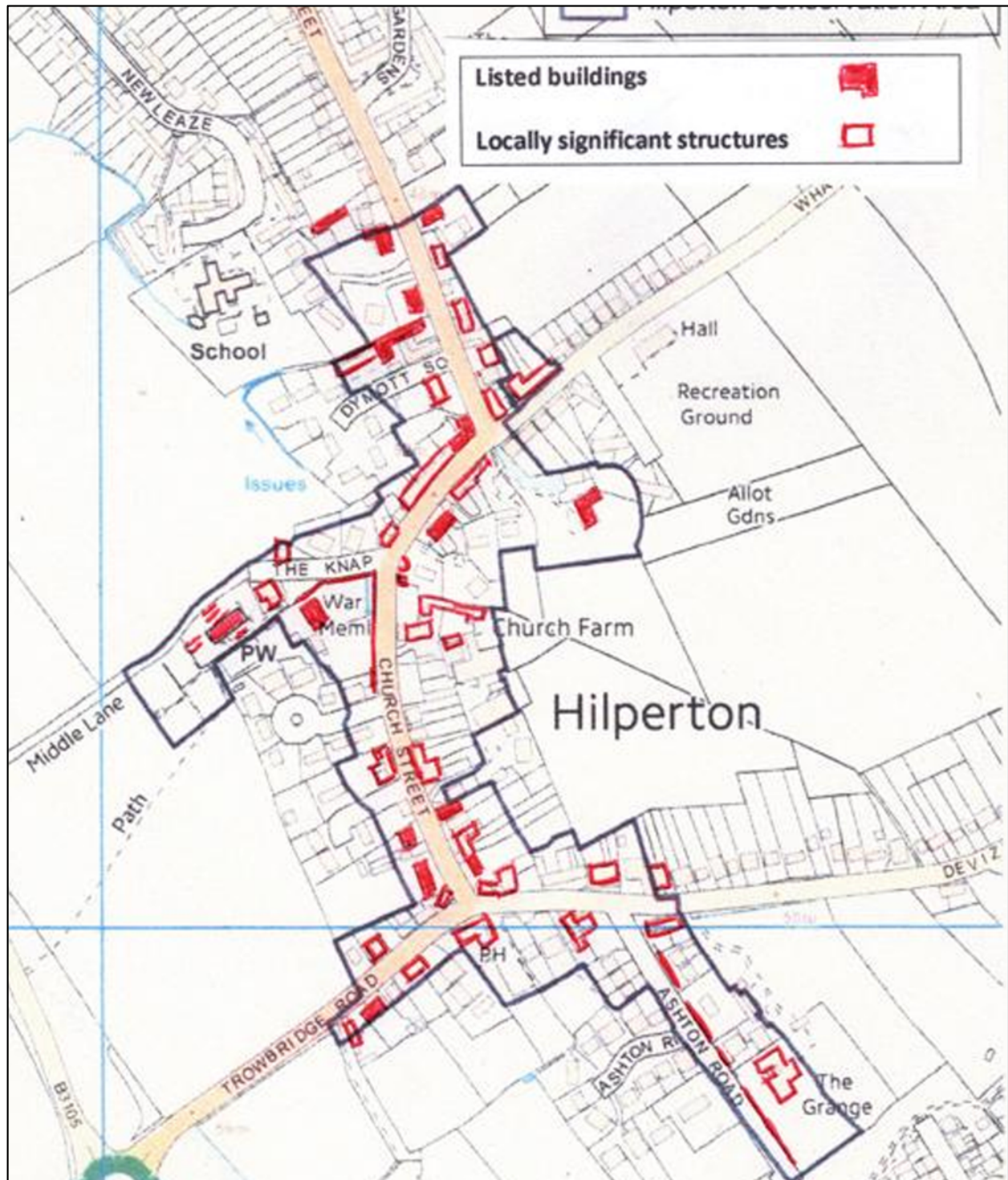


Figure 6 – Map from Hilperton Character Appraisal

- 5.17. The stable building will be retained and sensitively converted to form a wing to the new dwelling. It will be connected to the two-storey element by a single storey link which follows the roof pitch of the stable building. The layout and form of the extended buildings follows the historical character of the site, being set around a courtyard, allowing the historical integrity of the buildings and site to be understood. The stables

are too small to viably convert to a dwelling, without an extension.

- 5.18. In accordance with the NPPF, a heritage assessment must consider the contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset and ensure that proposals preserve that significance so far as possible. The Framework emphasises a proportionate, evidence led approach: where setting makes only a limited or neutral contribution to significance, change within that setting will not automatically equate to harm. The change in the surroundings of a listed building only affects significance where those surroundings contribute meaningfully to how the asset is experienced or understood.
- 5.19. The significance of the listed buildings of Old Forge Cottage and Willow Cottage, derives principally from their late-seventeenth-century architectural form, robust rubble-stone construction, stone-slate roof, and surviving mullioned casements, as well as their historic plan form and evidential value as a pair of vernacular cottages on Trowbridge Road. The listing description confirms this focus on architectural and historic fabric, identifying features such as the baffle entry, mullioned windows, continuous moulded lintel string course, and surviving internal elements including chamfered beams and historic fireplaces
- 5.20. Nothing in the list entry identifies, the application site, or a wider rural setting as a key contributor to their significance, nor is the significance of the listed building rooted in its original use, an undeveloped curtilage or an open agrarian backdrop. The character of the significance is therefore primarily architectural, historic and evidential, rather than landscape-derived.
- 5.21. The site's position set back from Trowbridge Road, behind the existing frontage development and contained within an already developed site, ensures no intrusion into the immediate experience of the listed cottages or their principal façades. The application site lies behind existing development on Trowbridge Road and is not perceived as part of the cottages' historic curtilage. The land has evolved over time through subdivisions, piecemeal alterations, removal of earlier structures and erection of a later utilitarian building.
-

-
- 5.22. Because the proposal sits behind existing boundary treatment, its visibility from key public viewpoints is limited. The development does not impose upon the streetscene, nor does not compete with the listed building, and does not alter the established building grain that characterises this part of the village. The proposal also preserves the important entrance to Hilperton formed by the mature trees at the village entrance. These trees will not be impacted by the development and continue to frame the approach to the Conservation Area.
- 5.23. The Hilperton Character Appraisal describes the special interest of the area as arising from its historic linear form, strong roadside enclosure, mature trees and the visual interplay between traditional stone buildings. The design responds directly to these characteristics. The new boundary treatments use local stone, reinforcing enclosure. The siting respects historic plot structure and the retention of mature trees preserves the verdant character that defines the settlement edge. Similarly, the Hilperton Design Statement emphasises the importance of sympathetic materials, subservient siting, and forms that do not erode the historic evolution of the village. The proposal accords with these principles by keeping the building outside key views, avoiding any interruption of the settlement entrance, and using a design language that echoes local vernacular.
- 5.24. Given the limited contribution of the application site to the significance of Old Forge Cottage and Willow Cottage, the existing developed character of the land, the absence of intervisibility or historical functional connection, and the sensitive design and material approach, the proposal does not harm the significance of the listed building. It also preserves the character and appearance of the Hilperton Conservation Area. The development therefore fully complies with Core Policy 57 and 58 and the objectives of the NPPF.

Residential amenity

- 5.25. Core Policy 57 requires development to have 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 and overshadowing.

- 5.26. The placement and orientation of the dwelling has been informed by the constraints of the site which include the position of neighbouring occupiers. It has been designed to minimise any negative impact on neighbouring properties and maintain privacy for both the future occupants and those in the surrounding homes.
- 5.27. Whilst the development will change how the neighbouring occupier experienced the site, the does not equate to harm. The new built form development is set back from all neighbouring boundaries, with the two-storey elements located centrally within the plot and away from the northern boundary. Importantly, the proposal does not increase the height of the existing stable building located close to that boundary, and no additional windows are introduced in this area, meaning the current relationship of built form along the boundary remains unchanged.
- 5.28. At first-floor level, the few proposed windows facing north are positioned at an acceptable distance from neighbouring dwellings and the nearest elevations. These windows primarily serve transitional or low-intensity spaces such as the landing, and although a bedroom window is also present on this elevation, any potential views toward neighbouring properties would be oblique and indirect. Moreover, the separation distance between the nearest first-floor bedroom window and the rear elevation of the closest neighbouring dwelling exceeds approximately 22 metres (as shown at Figure 7), a distance generally accepted as sufficient to prevent harmful overlooking or loss of privacy in residential environments.

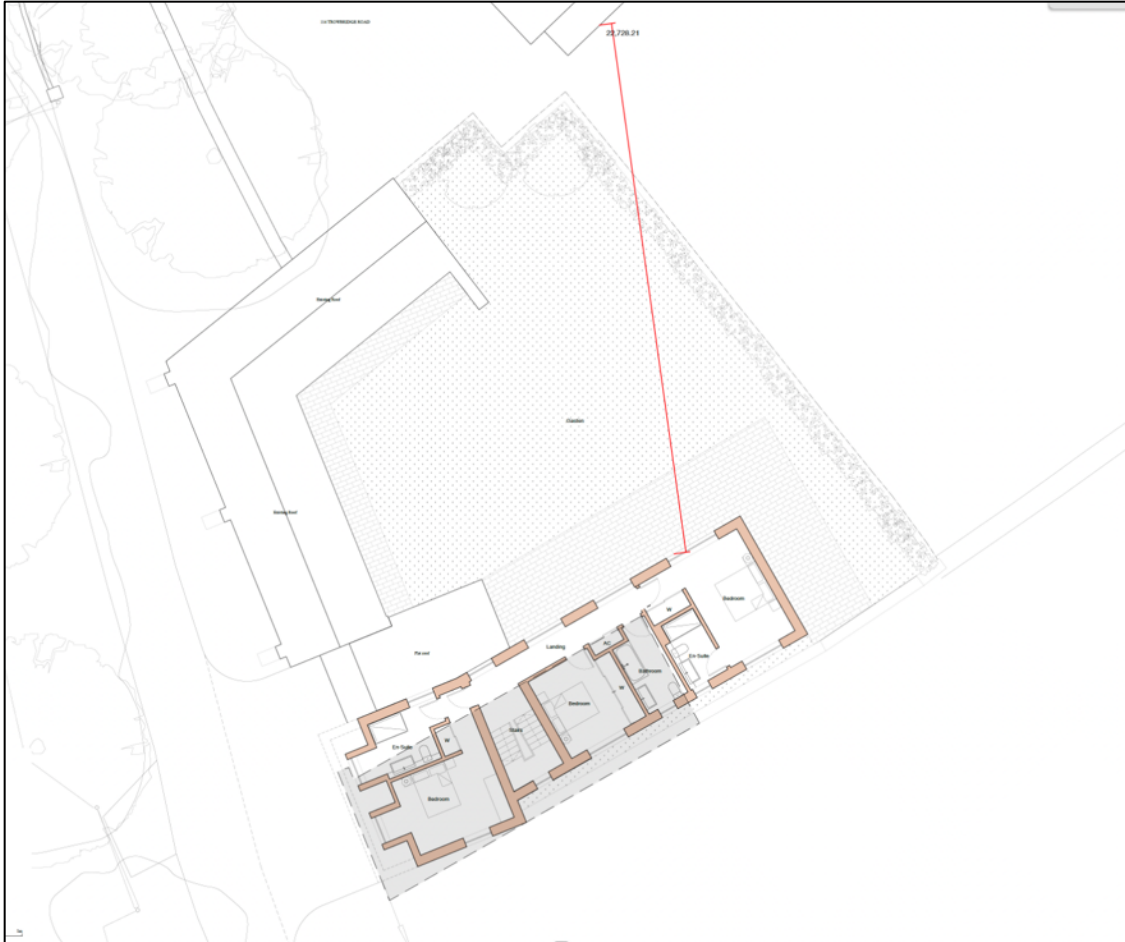


Figure 7 – Relationship with neighbouring occupier

- 5.29. The siting of the dwelling also ensures that it will not appear overbearing or dominating when experienced from adjoining gardens or internal living spaces. While the proposal will inevitably alter how neighbours perceive the site, given that it is currently occupied by outbuildings, such a change does not equate to harm. The height, scale and positioning of the new dwelling ensures that it will sit comfortably within the plot and not intrude unacceptably on neighbouring outlook. Due to the scale, siting and articulation of the roof form, there will be no undue sense of enclosure for adjoining occupiers. The open character of neighbouring gardens will remain, and views toward the wider landscape will still exist.
- 5.30. With regards to light levels, the separation distances and orientation ensure there will be no significant overshadowing of neighbouring properties or their amenity spaces.

The principal mass of the dwelling is concentrated away from boundaries, and the retained single-storey building along the northern edge ensures the proposal does not introduce any higher form that could materially reduce daylight to the adjacent property at this point. The enhanced landscape treatment shown on the site plan will also help filter views at ground floor without creating overshadowing impacts.

- 5.31. Taken together, the spacing, careful window placement, moderated scale and robust boundary treatment ensure that the proposed development would not materially harm the amenity of neighbouring occupiers in terms of privacy, outlook, daylight or overbearing impact. The development is therefore compliant with Core Policy 57.

Ecological Implications

- 5.32. The application is accompanied by Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA). No statutory designated sites (SAC, SPA or SSSI) are present within 2 km of the site. The site lies outside the consultation zone for the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC but within the Trowbridge and Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy Area (Medium Risk Zone). Several Local Wildlife Sites are present within 2 km but will not be directly affected by the proposals.
- 5.33. The stable building was assessed as having high potential for roosting bats and was therefore subject to three dusk emergence surveys between July and September 2025, supported by static bat detector monitoring. No bats were recorded emerging from the building during emergence surveys. However, static monitoring identified greater horseshoe bat and brown long-eared bat activity within the stable building, likely representing opportunistic use as a night roost, feeding perch or for social behaviour following the creation of fly-in access.
- 5.34. As a result, the building is considered to support a bat roost of low conservation significance, and works will require a Natural England European Protected Species licence.

-
- 5.35. Bat activity surveys recorded commuting and foraging by a range of bat species over and around the site, including common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, noctule, serotine, Myotis species and lesser horseshoe bat, reflecting the good connectivity of the wider landscape.
- 5.36. The open barn structure was assessed as having negligible potential for roosting bats, and no evidence of bat use was recorded. No evidence of nesting birds was recorded during surveys, though buildings and surrounding habitats are suitable for nesting species. No evidence of badgers or their setts was found, and the site has low suitability for great crested newts and reptiles due to limited habitat availability
- 5.37. Mitigation for bats will be secured through a Natural England licence and includes ecological supervision of works, exclusion measures where necessary, and the provision of a dedicated bat loft with an access tunnel suitable for greater horseshoe and brown long-eared bats within the proposed development. Additional measures include sensitive external lighting design, retention and enhancement of habitat connectivity, and new native planting.
- 5.38. Ecological enhancements are also proposed, including integrated swift and house martin nesting features within the new building fabric, delivering a net benefit for biodiversity.
- 5.39. Overall, subject to the implementation of the recommended mitigation, licensing and enhancement measures, the proposals are considered acceptable in ecological terms and compliant with relevant wildlife legislation and planning policy.
- 5.40. The introduction of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021) now requires development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat. However, there are a list of developments that are exempt from this regulation.
-

-
- 5.41. As a self-build, as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, the development would fall under the exemptions and as such, is not required to comply with the mandatory 10% BNG. A Unilateral Undertaking will be submitted to secure the development as self build.

Highway safety implications

- 5.42. Core Policy 61 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires new development to be served by a safe access to the highway. Paragraph 115 of the NPPF states development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 5.43. The site is within a highly sustainable location, close to local services and facilities, both at Hilperton and Trowbridge. There are bus stops on Trowbridge Road, immediately outside of the site. The future occupiers of the development will not be reliant on the private car to meet their day to day needs.
- 5.44. The site has an existing access from Palmers Close which itself is accessed from Trowbridge Road. Given the access is existing and the buildings have an existing lawful use, which would generate vehicular movements, any increase in movements is not considered to be material. Even if the use of the access at Trowbridge Road is intensified, the access onto Trowbridge Road, benefits from good visibility.
- 5.45. Two parking spaces will be provided in the integral double garage, with an additional space to the front of the garage. Turning opportunities are available on site to ensure that the site can be accessed and egressed in forward gear. An electric vehicular charging point will be provided within the garage as well as space for bicycle storage.



Fig 8 – Block/floor plan – illustrating parking within garage and to the front of the site

- 5.46. Overall, therefore, the proposed development will not result in any harm to highway safety, and the development therefore fully complies with Core Policy 61 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

Arboricultural Matters

- 5.47. The application is accompanied by a tree survey which covers the site and surrounding land. There are no trees on the site, but a number of those, close to, but set away from the site are covered by a Tree Protection Order. However, the development is set a sufficient distance away from these trees to ensure that they will be safeguarded throughout construction, and the lifetime of the development. If deemed necessary, a Tree Protection Plan can be conditioned as part of any permission.

6. PLANNING BENEFITS

- 6.1. The application proposals will deliver simultaneously, economic, social and environmental benefits. With regards to economic benefits, the development will aid in supporting local businesses and services. This is in line with the advice of the NPPF

which explains that housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. The development would contribute to this aim.

- 6.2. Whilst limited in time, the development will generate economic benefits through the construction period. The Council will also receive a New Homes Bonus and Community Infrastructure Levy which represents a further economic benefit.
- 6.3. Supporting the local facilities so they can continue in the future has significant social benefits for the community. The additional population has the potential to bring new users to the nearby facilities. The development will contribute to the aim of ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations. Given the lack of housing land supply, this should be given substantial weight.
- 6.4. In relation to environmental benefits, the scheme offers opportunity for environmental improvements, including ecological enhancements. Further, the development makes an efficient use of land and will bring an existing building back into use. The development would accord with the environmental dimension of sustainable development.

7. CONCLUSION AND PLANNING BALANCE

- 7.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 outlines that 'if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise'.
- 7.2. The application proposes a new dwelling within the development boundary and is in full accordance with the Development Plan. The proposal offers the opportunity to make efficient use of land and use and extend an existing building to facilitate a high quality dwelling in a sustainable location. The scheme is sensitive to its siting adjacent

to the Hilpert Conservation Area and the adjoining Grade II listed buildings.

- 7.3. This statement demonstrates that the scheme is also acceptable in terms of highway safety, residential amenity, and ecological matters. No material harm results from the development.
- 7.4. Even if the Council were to identify harm, the importance of developing brownfield land is highlighted in paragraph 125 of the Framework, which explains that the decision maker must give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, proposals for which should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused. Any harm would be nowhere near substantial harm, which is a very high bar.
- 7.5. In addition as highlighted above, the Council cannot demonstrate the required housing land supply. The paragraph 11d(ii) presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged in this case. Permission should be granted unless, the adverse impacts of approving the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the Framework policies as a whole. For the reasons outlined above, it is not considered that there is any harm that significantly and demonstrably outweighs the benefits of the proposals. The development represents sustainable development.
- 7.6. The Council is therefore respectfully encouraged to approve this planning application.