

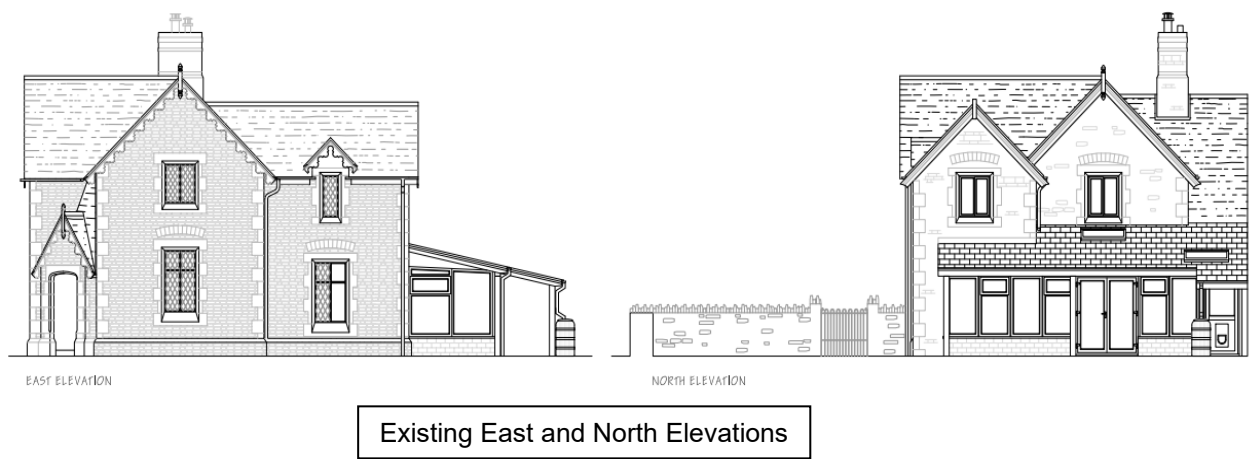
APPLICATION FOR HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING PERMISSION

DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/08580
APPLICATION TYPE:	Householder planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	School House, Sopworth, Chippenham, SN14 6PS
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Proposed 2 storey rear extension and single storey flat roof extension. Proposed garage extension. Raise height of stone boundary wall
RECOMMENDATION:	That Planning Permission be GRANTED

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks planning permission for a proposed first floor rear extension and a single storey flat roof extension, as well as a proposed garage extension and raising the height of the existing stone boundary wall. The application is submitted using Householder application forms.



The proposed ground floor extension will enable an enlarged dining and living area with adjacent utility room, with associated internal reconfiguration enabling an enlarged kitchen space. The ground floor extension is proposed to be a flat roof structure incorporating two raised timber roof lanterns to enable light into each section of the extension. Externally it is proposed for 2 sets of double doors to the rear elevation for access to the rear garden and a replacement door to the utility area. The side elevation will also feature 2 additional ground floor windows. The proposed positioning of the roof lanterns will ensure that there is no encroachment on the first floor windows, nor disrupt their outlook.

The proposed extension will measure approx. 8.9m in width by 4.3m deep, to a height of 3m to the eaves (or 3.3m to the top of the roof lantern). The extension is proposed to be built on the rear boundary line with the neighbouring property – the Village Hall – adjacent to an existing outbuilding in their rear amenity space.

To the upper floor, it is proposed to bring forward the established built line to extend bedroom 1 further forward of the existing adjacent dressing area. The built form will be positioned behind the roof lantern to the ground floor below. Whilst there will be no additional fenestration proposed to the first floor, the arrangement of the extension will retain a rear gable. The eaves of this gable will be positioned lower than the adjacent gable and will incorporate an attractive bargeboard akin to that displayed across the other elevations of the property. The proposed extension will measure approx 4.6m in width, projecting approx. 1.3m from the adjacent gable but with the total depth approx. 3.4m.

Construction materials for the extensions to the building are to match the main dwelling – namely stone – with the addition of timber and upvc windows and doors, as well as decorative coping stones to echo the current character and appearance of the property.

The existing garage is located within the curtilage of the main dwelling, positioned at the rear boundary. Its current form is an open fronted timber structure with a tiled pitched roof. It is proposed to extend the garage, with the addition of external cladding to enclose the structure and the inclusion of timber garage doors. The current measurements of the garage are approx. 3.6m in width, 6m deep to a height of 3.7m. With the proposed extension, this would increase to approx. 7.6m deep, whilst retaining the existing height and width.

Lastly, it is proposed to increase the height of the existing stone front and side boundary wall. The wall is attached to the east elevation of the property and curves around the perimeter, following the line of the adjacent road, concluding in proximity to the rear garage. The wall is proposed to increase by approx. 1m, thereby taking its total height, including the cock and hen copping, to approx. 2.1m and will include a timber entrance door adjacent to the principal elevation. The increase in height for the wall is to enable enhanced privacy to the rear garden from the adjacent road and public vantage points.

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The property known as School House is a two storey semi-detached dwelling situated on the no-through road of Church Lane in the village of Sopworth, near Chippenham. The property is semi-detached to the Village Hall and lies within both the Cotswolds National Landscape

and Sopworth Conservation Area, and is situated adjacent to Grade II* St Marys Church. The property is of stone construction, with plain slate tiles to the roof and timber and UPVC windows and doors. The surrounding area is characterised by predominantly detached dwellings of stone construction with examples of rendered properties also in proximity.



Principal elevation (l) and rear elevation (r)

The existing dwelling is a character property of heritage value, with the principal elevation fronting Church Lane featuring a tiled pitched roof and front gable, with an off-set entrance accessed via a stone porch with an attractive bargeboard surround. The arrangement of the roof has a valley between the principal elevation and side (east) elevation, below which the off-set porch is situated.

The side (east) elevation also features a first floor gable whilst the rear (north) elevation features 2 further first floor gables of differing heights and positioning, with the larger furthestmost gable serving a first floor bedroom and the smaller fronting gable serving an adjacent dressing room area. The rear (north) elevation currently has a single storey rear lean-to extension with a tiled sloping roof used for a dining area whilst a section of the sloping roof extends beyond its current built line to provide a small covered entrance area into the ground floor utility room.

The application site is subject to the following planning policy constraints:

- Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly AONB)
- Sopworth Conservation Area
- Countryside Character Area – Cotswolds
- Area Susceptible to ground water flooding

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary

N/87/01246/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approved Date: 3/9/1987 – EXTENSION TO DWELLING
N/87/00385/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Refused Date: 27/4/1987 – ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSION TO DWELLING
N/91/00566/SEC - Decision - Approve Date: 30/4/1991 – SECTION 64 - PROPOSED GARDEN ROOM
N/91/01619/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approved Date: 17/9/1991 – ERECTION OF CONSERVATORY
N/91/01302/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approved Date: 6/9/1991 – CONSTRUCTION OF GARDEN ROOM WITHIN EXISTING WALL GARDEN
N/08/01954/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Approve with Conditions Date: 10/10/2008 – Replacement Conservatory Roof, Car-Port and Garden Shed Structure

RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Wiltshire Core Strategy:

- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
- Core Policy 51: Landscape
- Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment
- Core Policy 61: Transport and New Development
- Core Policy 64: Demand Management

Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2025-2030:

- Policy CE1: Landscape
- Policy CE4: Local Distinctiveness
- Policy CE6: Dark Skies

Wiltshire Design Guide: Appendix D – Design Guidance for Householder extensions

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

- Section 12: Achieving Well Designed Places
- Section 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

The Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide

ISSUES

- Design and Impact upon the character and context of the area and the Cotswold National Landscape
- Residential Amenity
- Highways and parking
- Heritage Assets
- Drainage and Flood Risk

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Sopworth Parish Council: No comments received

Wiltshire Council Highways: No objection –

I refer to the above consultation for planning advice dated 12/11/2025 with regard to permission for a proposed 2 storey rear extension and single storey flat roof extension. Proposed garage extension. Raise height of stone boundary wall.

The site has existing vehicle access from a private section of Church Lane, to the south of the site Church Lane is an unclassified section of public highway subject to a speed limit of 40mph. There are no proposals to alter the access with the public highway.

The proposals seek to increase the living accommodation at ground floor and on the first floor, this would not result in any increase in the existing bedroom quantum. The existing site has a shortfall of one vehicle parking space below the expected minimum parking provision, however this is an existing situation and therefore any overspill parking is already being absorbed by the existing on-street parking.

The proposal to turn the car port into a garage space would allow for a single vehicle to park within the curtilage as per the previous situation, it is therefore considered that no highway objection be raised

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was publicised by direct neighbour letter, however no representations have been made.

ASSESSMENT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

"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."

In accordance with this statutory requirement, this application has been assessed against the relevant policies of the Development Plan, including the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and, where applicable, any made Neighbourhood Plans.

Design and Impact upon the character and context of the area and the Cotswolds National Landscape

WCS Core Policy 57 - Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that all new development is of high design quality, reflecting local context, character, and distinctiveness.

WCS Core Policy 51 of the WCS states that development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, whilst any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures.

WCS Core Policy 58 states that development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment.

The application site is located within the Cotswold National Landscape (formerly AONB) and as such Section 15 of the NPPF is relevant. Section 245 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA) introduced a statutory duty on relevant authorities to seek to further the statutory purposes of protected landscapes. With regards to National Landscapes, this requirement has been incorporated into Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, which now states *"In exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty in England, a relevant authority other than a devolved Welsh authority must seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty."*

This replaces the previous version of Section 85 of the CROW Act. Any relevant authority is required to take all reasonable and proportionate steps to explore how the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of National Landscapes can be furthered. Similarly, the NPPF advises (paragraph 182) that *"Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues."*

Policy CE1 of the Cotswold National Landscape Management Plan 2025-2030 states that development should have regard to the scenic quality of the location and its setting and ensure that views - including those into and out of the National Landscape – and visual amenity are conserved and enhanced. Policy CE4 states that proposals that are likely to impact on the local distinctiveness of the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) should be delivered in a way that is compatible with and seek to further the conservation and enhancement of this local distinctiveness. Policy CE6 states that proposals that have the potential to impact on the dark skies of the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) should be delivered in a way that is compatible with and seek to further the conservation and enhancement of these dark skies, by seeking to avoid and where avoiding is not possible, minimise lighting.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in Paragraph 176, states that "great weight" should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Landscapes (formerly Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty). Development within or affecting the setting of a National Landscape must demonstrate that it will not result in unacceptable harm to the special qualities of that area.

Section 12 of the NPPF expects a good standard of design, whilst section 15 details conserving and enhancing the natural environment. The Wiltshire Design Guide elaborates on WCS Core Policy 57 and requires consideration that should be given to the external appearance, design and materials used for development.

Officers consider that the proposed extensions to the main dwelling and garage and the increased height to the wall are acceptable and will not result in unacceptable visual impact. The proposed rear extension is considered to be more in-keeping with the character and appearance of the property than the current existing arrangement, with the incorporation of matching materials to help integrate the proposal with the existing building, whilst the use of a flat roof will help enable the ground floor extension to remain subservient to the main dwelling. Whilst the positioning of the first floor extension is projecting forward of the existing built form, it is not considered to result in an overbearing or incongruous appearance, with the proposed bargeboard detailing and retention of the gable helping to maintain the existing character and appearance of the building. The proposed extension to the garage, including the use of sympathetic materials, also ensure that the works will integrate within the existing site and enable the building to be a more usable space.

The proposed increase in the height of the existing stone wall is proportionate to the existing structure, and uses matching materials to ensure visual continuity without affecting sightlines, or overshadowing adjacent land.

Having regard to the above, the proposal complies with the design principles set out in Core Policies 51, 57 and 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, as the proposal demonstrates high quality design that reflects the local character of the existing building and the surrounding area, and will not result in harm to the landscape and character of the Cotswolds National Landscape and Sopworth Conservation Area. In addition, the proposed works comply with policies CE1, CE4 and CE6 of the Cotswold National Landscape Management Plan, Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide and sections 12 and 15 of the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

Point vii of Core Policy 57 - Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that developments do not adversely affect neighbouring properties. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Paragraph 135(f), stresses that planning decisions should ensure developments provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

The property is semi-detached to the Village Hall and the proposed extensions are adjacent to the side boundary. The Village Hall features an existing rear structure adjacent to this boundary which is likely to provide some screening of views toward the proposed development. While the ground floor extension will be slightly larger than the current rear addition and the first-floor extension will project further forward than the existing building line, no additional side-facing windows are proposed. The first floor extension is set back from the side boundary with its positioning and gable comparable to the existing arrangement, helping to mitigate against any unacceptable overbearing effects.

Brake House is located to the west of the Village Hall, however the north-westerly part of the garden adjoins with the host dwelling. Views would be possible across to the garage and potentially to the works to the main building, however there will be a degree of the screening due to the positioning of the Village Hall and its outbuildings with sufficient separation distances between the properties.

The property located to the rear of the host dwelling is Churchleaze Farm. The boundary between these two properties is where the existing garage is located. The length of the garage is proposed to be extended however the height will remain as existing. The rear boundary currently features established trees and planting which help provide screening to the garage and proposed development to the main dwelling.

Grade II* St Marys Church is located to the east of the host dwelling, divided by Church Lane running between the buildings. The host dwelling and its curtilage is separate to that of the Church and its grounds. Whilst the external works to the garage and boundary wall will be visible, with possible vantage points of the extensions to the main dwelling, the separation distance between the buildings is considered sufficient.

The proposed development has been assessed in terms of its potential impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, with particular regard to loss of light, overshadowing, loss of privacy, and overbearing effects. Officers considered that the proposed works will not result in unacceptable impact to the residential amenity of the surrounding properties and buildings, nor will it result in unacceptable overshadowing or loss of light. The proposal therefore accords with Core Policy 57 point vii in respect of safeguarding residential amenity and Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide.

Highways Impact

Core Policy 57 (xiv) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that development must meet the requirements of Core Policy 61. This policy requires proposals to be capable of being served by safe access to the highway network. Core Policy 64 seeks to ensure compliance with parking standards set out in the Local Transport Plan.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Paragraph 115 and 116, requires that development proposals do not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety and that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users.

The proposal does not include proposed alterations to the existing access and parking arrangements and will remain as a 2 bedroom property. The existing parking arrangements are to the front of the property however the proposed works to the garage will enable its utilisation for car parking for a single car within the existing curtilage. The increase in height to the boundary will not affect or impede upon current sightlines whilst driving along Church Lane. Wiltshire Council Highways Officers have raised no objection to the proposed works and therefore the proposed development is not considered to result in any adverse impact on highway safety. Adequate parking and turning provision is provided in accordance with Wiltshire's adopted parking standards, and access arrangements are acceptable. The

proposal is therefore considered to comply with Core Policies 57 (xiv), 61 and 64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the NPPF, and the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan.

Heritage Impact

From the point of view of the historic environment the main statutory tests are set out within the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66 requires that special regard be given to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess. Section 72(1) of the Act requires the Council to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of designated Conservation Areas.

The Council's Core Strategy Policy CP58 'Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment' requires that designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner appropriate to their significance and encourages proposals which improve the condition of heritage assets at risk.

The Council's Core Strategy CP 57: Ensuring high quality design requires a high quality of design in all new developments. The policy requires applicants to "demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire through (amongst other things) responding to the value of the natural and historic environment and being sympathetic to and conserving historic buildings and landscapes. Development is required to respond positively to the existing in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate the building into its setting.

The NPPF outlines government policy for planning. Chapter 16 of the NPPF 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the Government's high-level policies concerning heritage and sustainable development.

The property is located within the Sopworth Conservation Area. The surrounding area is characterised by predominantly stone dwellings and buildings of similar appearance. The proposed works to the dwelling itself utilise matching materials and details, thereby helping to integrate the proposed additions with the existing character of the dwelling to be sympathetic and in-keeping with the surrounding area. The external works to the garage continues the use of timber in its construction, whilst the boundary wall incorporates the original detailing into its design.

As previously discussed, the property lies approximately 23m from St Marys Church which is Grade II* listed. Due to this separation, the proposed development will not result in any harm to its setting or significance. The separation provided by the public highway, combined with existing boundary treatments and intervening landscaping, ensures that the church remains visually prominent and its historic character unaffected. The scale, design, and materials of the proposal are sympathetic to the surrounding context and do not introduce elements that would compete with or detract from the church's architectural or historic value.

The proposal, by virtue of its scale, design, and use of materials, is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Sopworth Conservation Area and setting of the heritage

asset. It would not result in harm to the significance of any heritage assets and is therefore considered to comply with Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Householder planning applications are exempt from the requirement to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain under Schedule 7A, Section 4(2)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as inserted by the Environment Act 2021.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in terms of its design, scale, and relationship with the surrounding area, providing works that are in-keeping and sympathetic to the host dwelling and its current appearance. It would not result in any unacceptable harm to the character of the locality, the Sopworth Conservation Area or the Cotswolds National Landscape. In addition, the proposed development will not result in unacceptable visual impact or unacceptable impact to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. The works are acceptable in the interests of highway safety and will not result in harm to the setting or significance of Grade II* St Marys Church.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the relevant policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the Wiltshire Local Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework. As such, the application is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions set out below.

RECOMMENDATION: That Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions.

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

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

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- 5818/04 – Site Location Plan received 28.10.25
- 5818/53 – Proposed Roof Plan received 28.10.25
- 5818/03 – Proposed Plans and Elevations received 28.10.25
- 5818/51 – Proposed Site Plan received 28.10.25
- 5818/52 – Proposed Block Plan received 28.10.25
- 5818/54 – Proposed Garage Plans and Elevations received 28.10.25

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