

APPLICATION FOR HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING PERMISSION DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/08365
APPLICATION TYPE:	Householder planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	95 Portway, Warminster, BA12 0AA
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Replacement porch and new window to front elevation. Render removed from the front elevation.
RECOMMENDATION:	That Planning Permission be GRANTED

SITE CONTEXT

95 Portway (the 'site') is a residential plot situated at the corner of Portway and Westbury Road, though the property primarily relates to Portway. Portway is a marked two-way street forming the historic northeast entrance to Warminster (designated as a Market Town in the Core Strategy).

The site is occupied by a two-storey end-terrace cottage and its associated amenity space. The house is a modest cottage, likely dating to the 19th century, similar to much of the Victorian and Georgian architecture forming the northern aspect of Portway. The property comprises the historic two-storey main range, the 1980s porch, 1980s first floor rear extension and a lean-to on its northern side. Its materials palette primarily comprises rendered walling (covering the historic brickwork), historic clay tile roofing, modern concrete tile roofing on the porch and warm felt on the lean-to. The architectural and historic interest of the property makes a positive contribution to its environment, though this contribution is dampened by the less sensitive modern additions, particularly the porch.

The site is surrounded by the following:

- Westbury Road to the north.
- Portway to the east.
- 93 Portway to the south – a historic two-storey cottage forming part of the short terrace.
- 1 Westbury Road to the west – a modern bungalow.

The site and its context are subject to the following planning designations (which are described and addressed in the assessment section below):

- Warminster Conservation Area
- No's 83-89 Portway are Grade II listed buildings located 20-40m south of the site.

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks planning permission for the construction of a replacement porch and the installation of a new window on the front elevation, in addition to the removal of the render on the front elevation.

The current porch connects to the living room of the property. It is to be demolished and replaced with a new porch situated further north along the facade in order to create an entrance to the dining room. The new porch measures 0.9m long by 1.5m wide and is 2.2m high at the eaves and 2.8m high at the ridge (by comparison the existing porch is 1.6m long and 2.6m wide and is the same height). The porch would be constructed of brickwork to match the historic brickwork (to be exposed) and clay tile roofing.

In order to facilitate the siting of the new porch, the original ground floor window opening would be infilled and a smaller replacement window provided further along the façade. The window dimensions match those of the first-floor openings.

The removal of render would expose the original brickwork façade.

PLANNING HISTORY

Relevant Planning Records			
Reference	Description	Decision	Date
W/82/00367/HIS	Cottage extension	Approved	10/3/1997
W/83/00109/FUL	Alterations and renovation	Approved	31/12/1997

RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Development Plan:

- Wiltshire Core Strategy (Adopted January 2015):
 - Core Policy 57: Ensuring high quality design and place shaping
 - Core Policy 58: Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment
- Warminster Neighbourhood Plan 2015/2026 (Made November 2016):
 - Policy L1: Design
 - Policy E5: Surrounding environment

Material Considerations:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024
 - Section 2. Achieving sustainable development
 - Section 12. Achieving well-designed places
 - Section 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- National Planning Practice Guidance
- National Design Guide
- Wiltshire Design Guide – Design Guidance for Householder Extensions
- Wiltshire Local Plan (has reached regulation 24 and examination stage)
 - Policy 98: Ensuring high quality design and place shaping

- Policy 99: Ensuring the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Warminster Town Council: No objection.

Conservation Officer: No comments offered.

Highways Department: No objection.

REPRESENTATIONS

No third party comments were received.

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 requirement, this application has been assessed against the relevant policies of the Development Plan and the material considerations set out above.

Having regard to the planning context and nature of the proposal, the following key matters are considered pertinent to the assessment of the proposal and are addressed in turn:

- Design
- Heritage
- Residential amenity

Design

Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires that all development be of high design quality, create a strong sense of place and complement its context, including through enhancing local distinctiveness and responding positively to local characteristics. This requirement is carried forward in draft Policy 98 of the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan.

Policy L1 of the Warminster Neighbourhood Plan encourages the design of development to reflect the principles outlined in Building for Life 12.

Policy E5 of the Neighbourhood Plan states that development should respect local character.

Commented [AE1]: TBC. Policy appears to be more landscape/townscape focused though policy wording can be generally applied to any development

Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide states that extensions should be subservient to and respect the scale, form, appearance and character of the host dwelling and should harmonise with its context.

Layout: The façade of the cottage and indeed the facades of most of the adjoining/nearby historic properties along Portway are partly characterised by the uniform and/or symmetrical layout of their fenestration and entrance. As shown below, the siting of the replacement porch is offset to the north and this siting therefore would be at odds with the character of the cottage and the wider street scene.



Scale: As shown above, the proposed porch would be significantly smaller, indeed it is just 1/3 of the footprint of the existing porch. In this regard, it would be more subservient to the historic main range, a reduced presence in the historic street scene and would enable the historic front garden to be mostly reinstated.

Appearance: The form, simple detailing and matching materials palette of the porch is appropriate. While the porch would displace one of the ground floor windows, negatively impacting the symmetrical character of the property, officers acknowledge that Schedule 2, Part 1, Class A of the General Permitted Development Order (the 'GDPO') would allow for the window to be moved without requiring planning permission. The dimensions of the new window reflect the first-floor openings which is appropriate. The removal of the render would expose the historic brickwork which is considered positive both in terms of appearance and function (allowing the building to 'breathe' better).

Having regard to the above, while the asymmetrical layout of the fenestration and entrance is considered to be at odds with the cottage and wider street scene, the far more modest scale

of the new porch and the removal of the render are considered to outweigh this impact. Consequently, the proposed design solution is considered to be, on balance, acceptable and in accordance with the design principles set out in Core Policy 57 of the Core Strategy, draft Policy 98 of the emerging Local Plan, Policies L1 and E5 of the Neighbourhood Plan and the Design Guide.

Heritage

Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conversation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special regard be had 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 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conversation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

Core Policy 57(i) and (iv) require that development proposals be sympathetic, respond positively to and conserve the historic environment.

Core Policy CP58 states that development should protect, conserve and, where possible, enhance the historic environment. The policy requires that heritage assets and their settings be conserved and/or enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance. This requirement is carried forward in draft Policy 99.

Paragraph 207 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should require applicants to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected by development, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the asset's significance.

Paragraph 210 states that local planning authorities should take account of, in relation to this case, (a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and (c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 212 clarifies that great weight should be given to an asset's conservation, irrespective of the level of harm.

Paragraph 213 states that any harm to the significance of a designated asset, including from development within its setting, requires clear and convincing justification.

Having regard to the Warminster Town Centre Conservation Area Character Assessment, the site falls within the Residential Area 1 character area which predominantly comprises Portway and The Close and is described as "*characterised by residential properties... today forms the edge of the Georgian and Victorian settlement*". In regard to the site location, the assessment states that "*The northern end of Portway has a steeply rising wooded backdrop which, along with the low density residential environment with mature gardens that surround the conservation area at this point, makes this one of the parts of Warminster that has retained its*

rural character". The assessment also sets out the historic local materials palette, which includes red brick walling and clay tile roofing.

95 Portway is located at the very northern tip of the Conservation Area and occupies a prominent position at the junction of two historic entrance points to the town. In this capacity, it denotes the entrance to the historic built-up area of the town. The rural cottage form and aesthetic of the site reference its historic edge-of-town setting, local materials palette (brickwork and clay tile roofing) and vernacular architectural style and construction techniques. Consequently, the site makes a prominent and positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The site also forms the setting of the Grade II listed Victorian short terrace of 83-89 Portway. For similar reasons to those set out in respect of the Conservation Area, 95 Portway makes a positive contribution to the setting of the listed terrace.

Having regard to the design assessment above, it is considered that the siting of the new porch and the resulting erosion of the symmetrical fenestration and entrance would be at odds with the site and its historic context. However, officers consider that this negative impact is outweighed/negated by:

- Replacing the large and unattractive 1980s porch with a much smaller porch that is more appropriate in terms of form and materials and enabling the historic front garden to be mostly reinstated.
- Removing the render, revealing the historic brickwork walling and allowing the building to breathe better; and
- The provisions of the GPDO which allows for the ground floor window to be relocated in the manner proposed.

Having regard to the above, it is considered that, on balance, the proposal conserves the character, appearance and setting of the relevant designated heritage assets. As such, the proposal complies with sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Core Policies 57 and 58, draft Policies 98 and 99 and section 16 of the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

Core Policy 57(vii) requires that development be compatible with the adjoining uses and protect the residential amenity of existing and future users of the site and its surroundings, including in respect of natural lighting, privacy, outlook and pollution sources. This requirement is carried forward in draft Policy 98.

The Design Guide states that minimum garden areas for all houses should be equivalent to the footprint of the house and that a back-to-back separation distance of minimum 20m should be respected. The guide also refers to the BRE Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight

as an appropriate source for assessing proposals. Appendix D of the guide states that extensions should not be unduly overbearing or unduly obtrusive to neighbouring properties.

The proposed replacement porch is of a smaller scale and is situated further from the neighbouring properties. The replacement window is similarly pulled further away from neighbouring properties. In this regard, the proposal would protect and to a minimal degree, improve the residential amenity of existing and future users of the site and its surroundings.

As such, the proposal achieves an acceptable standard of residential amenity for existing and future users of the site, and its adjoining uses in accordance with Core Policy 57(vii) and the Wiltshire Design Guide.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the proposed development constitutes the replacement of a rather large unattractive porch with a more modest structure that, while at odds with the symmetrical character of the property, it would be significantly more appropriate in terms of scale, form and appearance and is packaged with the removal of render which better reveals the historic fabric of the property. The proposal would have no additional impact in respect of residential amenity.

The proposal is therefore considered to be, on balance, acceptable in respect of design, heritage, residential amenity and all other matters and therefore complies with the aforementioned sections and policies of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Wiltshire Core Strategy, emerging Wiltshire Local Plan, Warminster Neighbourhood Plan, NPPF and Wiltshire Design Guide. As such, the application is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions set out below.

RECOMMENDATION: That Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to the following 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:

- Location plan, ref: PP-14368010v1
- Proposed block plan, ref: 108
- Proposed [floor] plan, ref: 103
- Proposed elevations, ref: 104

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

3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match in material, colour and texture those used in the existing building (including clay roof tiles for the porch) unless otherwise stated on the approved plans.

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