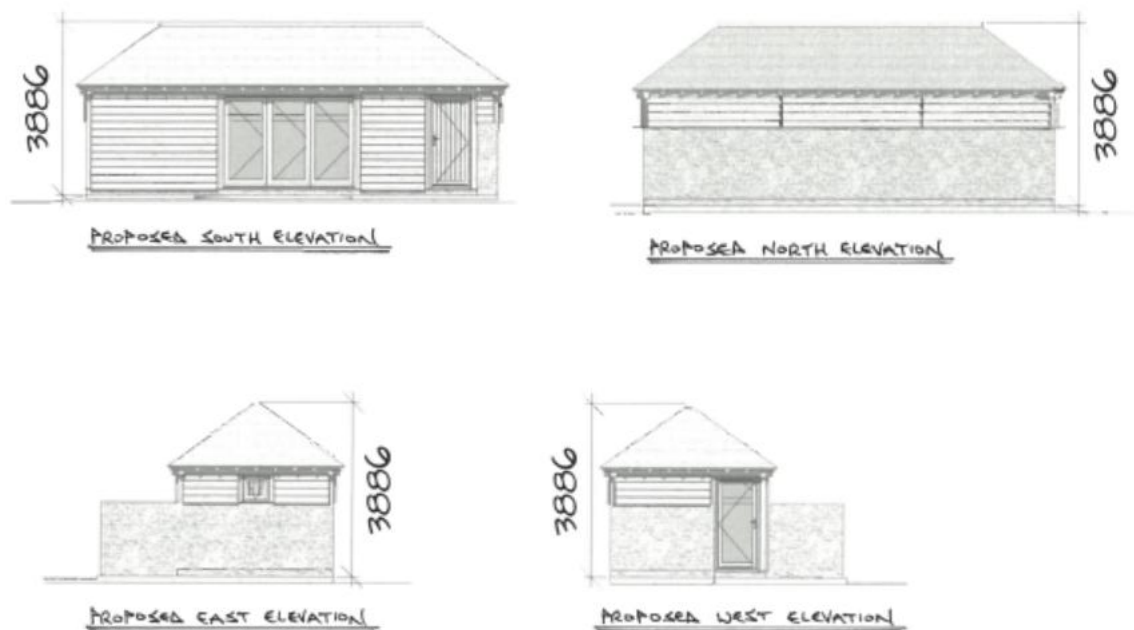


APPLICATION FOR HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING PERMISSION DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/09019
APPLICATION TYPE:	Householder planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	Westwells Farmhouse, Westwells, Neston, Corsham, SN13 9RQ
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Detached Oak Framed Pool Side Building.
RECOMMENDATION:	That Planning Permission be GRANTED

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks planning permission for the erection of a detached oak framed building adjacent to the existing in-ground swimming pool in the rear garden. The application is submitted using Householder application forms.



The main purpose of the building is to provide a covered area for drying and changing associated with the swimming pool, as well as a garden/summer room in which to enjoy the extensive garden. The building is proposed to have a hipped roof, constructed using an oak frame clad in timber weatherboard with clay plain tiles to the roof. The design features central sliding doors and an access door to the front (south) elevation, with a high level window to the side (east) elevation and additional door to the other side (west) elevation.

An existing 3-sided wall constructed from reclaimed materials stands adjacent to the swimming pool and appears to be the remains of a former modern structure, as no outbuilding is evident on historic map extracts. The proposal seeks to retain this wall and position the new outbuilding within it, so that three elevations are enclosed by the existing structure. The site

also includes an existing hardstanding, which will be reused upon which the building will be built. The proposed dimensions of the building are approx. 9.2m wide, 3.5m deep and 3.8m high, sloping to 2.5m at the eaves.

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The property known as Westwells Farmhouse is a one and a half storey dwelling located off of Westwells Road in Westwells, which is a small hamlet within the parish of Neston near Corsham. The property was a former farmhouse which is now occupied as a dwelling. The property is Grade II listed and dates from the early C17 and has been adapted, altered and extended during the C18, with modern additions including a ground floor extension that was built to protect a listed wall at the rear of the property. Within the curtilage of the building, there are a number of former farm outbuildings that have been incorporated into the main house and are retained as ancillary outbuildings.



The main dwelling is constructed from rubble stone with stone tiled pitched roofs, coped gables and saddlestone ridges and occupies a position that is set back from the main road with off road parking and outbuildings to the property frontage. The rear garden is somewhat extensive and backs onto an established industrial area and an identified local green space within the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan.

The official listing entry for the property is as follows:

Farmhouse, C17 and C18, rubble stone with stone-tiled roof, coped east gable with saddlestone, ridge stack and west end stack to main range. Left end section with ridge stack. One and a half storeys. Long main range with straight joints each side of centre section. Right end has 2 dormer gables with 2-light recessed cyma-moulded mullion windows and C20 ground floor French window. To rear, gable, possibly former chimney gable and dormer gable adjoining with 3-light recessed cyma-moulded upper window and 3-light ovolo-moulded window below, both with hoodmoulds. Front centre section has eaves casement over door to right, and 3-light flush cyma-moulded ground

floor window to left with small panes, hipped casement dormer over. Left section has similar 3-light small-paned window to ground floor and similar hipped casement dormer over. Wall-face stack to left. Left end range has gable to front and rear, front with Bridgwater-tiled lean-to. To left, one first floor boarded opening.

Two neighbouring buildings to the west, no's. 42-52 West Wells and no's. 62/64 Westwells are also Grade II listed buildings. The surrounding area is characterised by a variety of different building styles and materials. Adjacent to the host dwelling are properties of similar appearance and construction materials, however within the vicinity are bungalows constructed from reconstituted stone, with other properties displaying rendered elevations, whilst there are also modern dwellings constructed from Cotswold stone erected to the south of the site.

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

- Archaeology Monument Lines
- Archaeology Monument Polygons
- Local Green Space
- Grade II Listed Building
- Grade II Listed Buildings – 42-52 and 62/64 Westwells
- NE Priority Habitat Inventory
- Bath and BOA Bat SAC

PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal / Summary
N/90/01065/FUL - Full planning permission Decision - Withdrawn Date: 16/7/1990 – ERECTION OF DETACHED GARAGE AND VEHICULAR ACCESS
N/91/00923/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Approved Date: 13/6/1991 – PROPOSED NEW GARAGE, NEW BOUNDARY WALLS AND ALTERATIONSTO EXISTING BOUNDARY WALLS
N/91/00925/LBC - Listed building consent Decision - Approved Date: 5/6/1991 – PART DEMOLITION AND ALTERATIONOF EXISTING OUTBUILDING TO FORM ACCESS/REF PLANNING PERMISSION N/91/0173/F

RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Wiltshire Core Strategy:

- Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
- Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment

Corsham Neighbourhood Plan:

- Policy CNP ED1: Corsham Design Guide and Batscape Strategy
- Policy CNP E1: Development to Protect and Enrich the Bath & BOA Bat SAC
- Policy CNP HE1: Good quality design
- Policy CNP HE2: Innovatively designed proposals

Corsham Batscape Strategy

Corsham Design Guide

Wiltshire Design Guide:

- Appendix D – Design Guidance for Householder extensions

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

- Section 12: Achieving well designed places
- Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

The Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide

ISSUES

- Design and Impact upon the character and context of the area
- Residential Amenity
- Heritage Assets
- Bath and BOA Bat SAC

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Corsham Town Council: No objection

Wiltshire Council Archaeologist: No comment

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

WCS Core Policy 57 requires development to respond positively to the existing townscape and landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, elevational design and materials, with particular regard required for the compatibility of the design with the host dwelling and its surroundings, together with the relationship to adjoining buildings and spaces.

Policy CNP HE1 of the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan requires all new development within the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan Area to demonstrate good quality design by responding to and integrating with local surroundings and landscape context as well as the existing built environment. Policy CNP HE2 states innovatively designed proposals, which add to the vitality of Corsham, will be supported if scale, materials, colours and proportion. Policies CNP ED1 state the developments should take into account the Corsham Design Guide.

The Corsham Design Guide sets out the overall vision for sustainable future development, with the aspiration for it to compliment, improve and be sensitive to the existing built heritage and character and to protect and enhance the environmental assets within the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan Area.

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. Section 12 of the NPPF expects a good standard of design.

The design of the proposed building is sympathetic to its location within the grounds of the heritage asset, incorporating materials that are appropriate and in keeping with the setting. The scale, form, height and massing of the building are modest, and its position within the footprint of the former structure helps to soften its visual impact within the site. Overall, the building compliments the existing dwelling and is considered in-keeping with the existing character and appearance of both the property and its setting. Therefore, the proposal complies with WCS Core Policy 57 and policies HE1, HE2 and ED1 of the Corsham, Neighbourhood Plan, the Corsham and Wiltshire Design Guides and section 12 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 host dwelling benefits from an extensive rear garden which currently houses outbuildings as well as an in-ground swimming pool with raised transparent roof. The positioning of the proposed building adjacent to the swimming pool is not abutting the boundaries shared with the adjacent neighbours.

To the west of the site is 54 Westwells, whilst to the NE is Foxstone House. The positioning of the proposal may result in vantage points from both properties across to the building. The height and built form of the proposal ensures this is a ground floor structure whilst the main fenestration in the form of the sliding doors will face towards the swimming pool. Given the existing raised roof of the pool, this may help to screen views from this fenestration, whilst the first floor window to the side elevation will look across to the garden and landscaping within the host dwellings setting. The existing boundary treatments to the host property and the adjacent residential properties will help screen views across to the development site, whilst the distance to the boundaries is considered sufficient to not result in a loss of privacy or overbearing effects.

Given the height, mass and scale of the design, the positioning of the doors and windows to the building and the distance of the host dwelling boundary to these properties, Officers are satisfied that the proposed works will not result in unacceptable impact on residential amenity, nor it is expected to result in any significant or unacceptable visual impact, loss of light, overshadowing or overbearing effects. Whilst additional fenestration is proposed in the built form of the proposed building, Officers are also satisfied that this would not give rise to any unacceptable levels of overlooking, given the positioning, height and scale of the proposed building. Therefore the proposal complies with WCS Core Policy 57 and Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide, as an appropriate level of amenity can be achieved.

Heritage

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.

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.

Policies HE1 and HE2 to the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan requires that all new development should respect the historic character of the locality.

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 and the requirement to conserve and enhance the historic environment.

The proposed building is a detached structure to be built within the rear garden, some proximity from the main heritage asset and outbuildings. Whilst it is proposed to be built within the walls of a previous structure on this site, the historic maps available demonstrate that the previous structure was not a historic or listed building. Whilst being located within the grounds of a listed building, the proposed built form, design and materials demonstrate a sympathetic building that is in-keeping and helps preserve the current character and appearance of the listed building, and will not result in harm to the significance of the heritage asset or its setting.

It is also acknowledged that there are additional listed buildings in close proximity to the main listed dwelling – namely 42-52 West Wells and no's. 62/64 Westwells. Due to its modest scale, sympathetic design and use of appropriate materials, the development will not result in harm to the significance or setting of these heritage assets.

Ultimately, the proposal is contained within the grounds of the existing property but some distance from its immediate setting as a heritage asset. In this case, the Council's Conservation Officer has not commented, but there is considered to be sufficient information available to reach a conclusion that the significance of the Westwells Farmhouse is not affected with no harm caused to its setting as a heritage asset. Similarly, there is sufficient distance and intervening features to avoid impacting upon the setting on any other surrounding heritage asset.

The development is therefore considered to comply with Core Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, policy HE1 and HE2 to the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan as well as section 16 to the NPPF.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is complied with.

Bath and BOA Bat SAC

The wider landscape surrounding Box and Corsham is of international importance for bats. Locally, their habitat is protected through a Bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is focused around the Box mine complex, just outside of the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan boundary. Although the application site sits outside the formal boundary of the SAC/SSSI, it is known that essential foraging and commuting routes supporting this SAC extend for several kilometres outside the SAC boundary, including the entire Corsham Neighbourhood Plan area. The Batscape Strategy sets out to influence and enhance the sustainable development of Corsham through protecting important bat habitats within the designated Neighbourhood Plan area.

The application site is outside of the formal designations, but it is located within the buffer zone and it backs onto the railway corridor, which is known to be used by foraging bats. However, upon visiting the site, the condition of the property, as well as the roof and roof tiles was noted so as to ascertain whether there would be a likelihood of the presence of bats. Since the current condition is good, with no apparent damage or means of entry for bats to create a habitat within the roofspace of the property, Officers were satisfied that the proposal would not have any negative impact on the SAC, and will meet with the requirements of policy CP50 to the Wiltshire Core Strategy, policies E1 and ED1 of the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan, the Corsham Batscape Strategy and relevant legislative duties

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

It is considered that the proposal would, by reason of its height, scale, design and materials used, constitute a sympathetic addition to the building and wider context. The distances to the boundaries of the neighbouring properties are sufficient to help mitigate against any unacceptable impacts to residential amenity.

The proposal helps preserve the current character and appearance of the heritage asset without resulting in harm to the listed building or its outbuildings, nor the listed buildings within proximity.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the relevant policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan, the Wiltshire and Corsham Design Guides, the Corsham Batscape Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is also complied with.

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:

97412/08 – Proposed Perspectives received 13.11.25
97412/07A – Proposed Elevations received 13.11.25
97412/02A – Proposed Block Plan received 13.11.25
97412/06A – Proposed Plans received 13.11.25
97412/01 – Location Plan received 20.11.25

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