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Design & Access Statement

Proposed Erection of One New Dwelling at Land Rear of 115 Station Road, Westbury, Wiltshire, BA13 4HN

This should be viewed in conjunction with the associated plans submitted, AH2025/80 Sheet 1 & 2.

Brief description of proposal

The application is a full planning permission for the erection of one new dwelling at land rear of 115 Station Road, Westbury.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Design & Access Statement supports a full planning application for the erection of a new dwelling on land to the rear of 115 Station Road, Westbury. The proposal comprises a modest, well-designed detached dwelling, served by a new access and associated parking area.
- 1.2 The application is supported by detailed architectural drawings including a site plan, floor plans and elevations.
- 1.3 The development has been carefully designed to integrate into the established residential pattern of backland and tandem development along Station Road and the surrounding residential streets.
- 1.4 The site is located within the settlement boundary of Westbury, a Principal Settlement under Core Policy 1 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, where residential development is supported in principle.

2. Site Description

- 2.1 The application site forms part of the rear curtilage of No.115 Station Road, a traditional two-storey dwelling fronting the highway. The land to the rear is domestic in character and screened by existing fencing and vegetation.
- 2.2 Surrounding development comprises a mix of bungalows and two-storey dwellings, with numerous examples of garden-plot infill development and backland dwellings along Station Road, Chalford, Queens Road and surrounding streets.

2.3 The site benefits from:

- A sustainable location within walking distance of Westbury railway station
- Existing residential context
- No designated heritage, ecology or landscape constraints
- No public rights of way across the land
- Level ground with suitable access potential

This is an appropriate and sustainable location for a new dwelling.

3. Planning Context

3.1 Wiltshire Core Strategy

Relevant policies include:

- CP1 – Settlement Strategy
- CP2 – Delivery Strategy
- CP32 – Westbury Community Area
- CP57 – Ensuring High Quality Design
- CP60 / CP61 – Sustainable Transport
- CP67 – Flood Risk

Westbury is a Principal Settlement where growth is directed. CP1 and CP2 establish a presumption in favour of new housing within settlement boundaries.

3.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF supports sustainable residential development, emphasising:

- Efficient use of land (para 124)
- Small and medium-scale windfall and infill development
- Housing delivery where councils cannot demonstrate a robust 5-year housing land supply
- Good design as integral to sustainable development

As Wiltshire Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development (para. 11d) applies. The proposal must therefore be approved unless adverse impacts significantly outweigh the benefits.

3.3 Summary Position

The principle of a new dwelling within the settlement boundary of Westbury is fully supported by both local and national planning policy.

4. Principle of Development

4.1 In many similar delegated officer reports for approved Wiltshire applications, officers have stated:

“Infill development within the established settlement boundary is acceptable in principle and represents sustainable development in accordance with CP1 and CP2.”

This applies directly here. The site is:

- Within the Westbury settlement boundary
- Surrounded by existing residential properties
- Well connected to services and transport
- A logical, efficient use of underutilised residential garden land

4.2 Comparable approved Wiltshire cases include backland/infill dwellings at Studley, Melksham, Westbury Leigh, Salisbury Road Warminster, and Semington Road Melksham, where officers consistently concluded that modest infill housing in accessible urban locations constitutes sustainable development.

4.3 Given the Council’s current lack of 5-year supply, the tilted balance is engaged, further strengthening the presumption in favour of approval.

5. Design & Use

5.1 The proposed dwelling is a low rise, modest in scale, and designed to sit comfortably within the garden setting without appearing cramped or dominant.

Key design features:

- Low-profile roof form reducing massing
- Simple, contemporary design with traditional proportions
- Materials that reflect local vernacular
- Orientation to minimise overlooking
- Private amenity space to the rear
- Off-street parking consistent with local character

5.2 A low rise dwelling (almost single storey in appearance) of this scale would not appear out of keeping with the mixed residential character of the area & results in an efficient and appropriate use of residential curtilage. The design is carefully considered and harmonises with surrounding development.

6. Residential Amenity

6.1 The dwelling is positioned to avoid unacceptable impacts on neighbouring amenity. There are:

- No first-floor windows

- No overlooking of primary habitable rooms
- Adequate boundary screening
- Sufficient separation distances to all adjacent dwellings

Typical Wiltshire delegated reports for similar schemes have concluded:

“A single-storey dwelling with appropriate boundary treatment would not result in undue loss of privacy, overshadowing or overbearing impacts.”

The proposal maintains acceptable amenity for both existing and future residents.

7. Highways & Access

7.1 Access is provided via an upgraded vehicular arrangement, with appropriate visibility and turning space within the site. The scheme includes off-street parking meeting Wiltshire’s adopted parking standards.

Highways officers in comparable Wiltshire infill cases often state:

“Given the modest scale of the development, the proposal is not considered to result in a severe highway impact.”

“Access arrangements and parking provision are satisfactory.”

7.2 The site is within walking distance of bus services, the railway station, shops and services, fully supporting sustainable transport objectives (CP60).

8. Ecology & Biodiversity

8.1 Submitted Ecological Assessment

8.1.1 An **Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNGA)** has been prepared by **ABR Ecology Ltd** (January 2025) to accompany this application

8.1.2 The assessment was undertaken in accordance with CIEEM guidance and the DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric and includes a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), Daytime Bat Walkover (DBW), protected species assessment, and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) calculations.

8.1.3 The ecological survey was carried out on **27 November 2025** by suitably qualified and licensed ecologists.

8.2 Site Ecology & Habitats

8.2.1 The site comprises residential garden land and associated domestic features. Habitats recorded within the site include:

- Modified grassland
- Small areas of bramble scrub
- Non-native ornamental hedgerow

- Developed land and sealed surfaces
- Domestic outbuildings

8.2.2 No priority habitats are present on-site, and no watercourses occur within the site boundary. The nearest priority habitat (deciduous woodland) lies approximately 125 metres from the site and is separated by roads and existing development, such that no impacts arise

8.2.3 The site is therefore considered to be of **low intrinsic ecological value**, consistent with its established residential character.

8.3 Statutory and Non-Statutory Designated Sites

8.3.1 The site lies within the consultation zones for the **Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bat SAC** and the **Salisbury Plain SPA**.

8.3.2 Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bat SAC:

The assessment confirms that no SAC-associated commuting routes, foraging corridors, roosts or habitat features will be affected. Subject to adherence to a sensitive lighting strategy, no adverse effects on SAC integrity are anticipated.

8.3.3 Salisbury Plain SPA:

As the proposal results in a net increase of one dwelling within 6.4km of the SPA, mitigation will be required in accordance with Wiltshire Council's adopted Habitats Regulations Assessment strategy. This is routinely addressed via a financial contribution and does not present a barrier to development

8.3.4 The nearest Local Wildlife Site (Westbury Lakes) lies beyond the site boundary and is separated by roads and fencing. No impacts are anticipated.

8.4 Protected Species

8.4.1 Bats

8.4.2 A Daytime Bat Walkover confirmed that the outbuildings on site have negligible potential for roosting bats, with no evidence of bat use recorded. No trees will be affected by the proposal.

8.4.3 The site is likely to be used by bats for low-level foraging and commuting, typical of urban environments. To mitigate any potential effects, a detailed bat-sensitive lighting strategy is set out in the ecology report, including:

- Use of Warm-white LED lighting
- Avoidance of light spill onto boundary vegetation
- Directional, low intensity lighting where only necessary

8.4.4 Subject to these measures, no adverse impacts on bats are anticipated and no further bat surveys or licensing are required.

8.4.5 **Great Crested Newts**

8.4.6 The site lies within an **Amber Risk Zone** for great crested newts, with ponds present within 250 metres. However, terrestrial habitat on-site is extremely limited, heavily enclosed, and of low suitability. The ecology report concludes that **Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs)** during construction are sufficient, with no requirement for survey or licensing.

8.4.7 **Birds**

8.4.8 Vegetation on-site may support nesting birds. Standard nesting bird protection measures will be implemented, including timing of works or checks prior to clearance, in accordance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

8.4.9 **Other Species**

8.4.10 No evidence of badgers, dormice, reptiles, amphibians (beyond GCN considerations), barn owls or other protected species was recorded. The site is not considered to support these species in a meaningful way.

8.5 **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)**

8.5.1 A DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation accompanies the ecology report. The baseline habitat value of the site is low (0.14 area habitat units and 0.03 hedgerow units).

8.5.2 Due to the small scale and domestic nature of the site, a **10% Biodiversity Net Gain cannot be delivered fully on-site**. This position is typical of small infill and garden-plot developments. The applicant will therefore secure the required biodiversity gain through:

- Off-site biodiversity units; or
- Statutory biodiversity credits

8.5.3 A **Biodiversity Gain Plan** will be submitted and approved prior to commencement, in accordance with the Environment Act 2021.

8.6 **Biodiversity Enhancement**

8.6.1 Notwithstanding the limited scope for on-site gain, the proposal includes proportionate biodiversity enhancements, including:

- Installation of a bat box
- Installation of a bird nesting box
- Installation of bee bricks within the new dwelling

8.6.2 These measures provide ecological enhancement over and above the existing baseline and are consistent with Wiltshire Council's expectations for small-scale residential development.

8.7 **Conclusion on Ecology**

8.7.1 The submitted ecology assessment demonstrates that:

- The site is of low ecological value
- No protected species will be harmed
- No designated sites will be adversely affected

- Impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated by condition
- Biodiversity Net Gain will be secured off-site

8.7.2 The proposal is therefore fully compliant with the **NPPF**, the **Environment Act 2021**, and Wiltshire Core Strategy policies, and raises **no ecological objection** to the granting of planning permission.

9. Drainage & Flood Risk

9.1 The site lies within **Flood Zone 1**, the area of lowest risk. The dwelling will connect to:

- Foul drainage via the existing mains sewer
- Surface water via sustainable drainage solutions incorporated into the design (soakaway or equivalent)

9.2 Wiltshire's Drainage Team consistently accept drainage by condition for small infill dwellings, where the principle of effective drainage is clear. No flood risk concerns arise by the proposal.

10. Sustainability

10.1 The proposal incorporates sustainable principles including:

- High-performance building fabric
- Use of Renewable energy technology
- Energy-efficient heating
- Compact form reducing energy loss
- Use of an under-utilised urban site, reducing pressure for greenfield development
- Walking distance to services, reducing reliance on car travel

11. Conclusion

11.1 The proposed dwelling at the rear of 115 Station Road represents a well-designed, modest infill development within the Westbury settlement boundary. It aligns fully with local and national planning policy, offering the following benefits:

- Sustainable housing in a highly accessible location
- Efficient use of residential garden land
- No harm to neighbours or local character
- Safe highways and access arrangements
- No ecological or drainage objections

- Positive contribution to housing land supply at a time when Wiltshire cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply

11.2 In line with the NPPF and established Wiltshire officer precedent, the proposal constitutes sustainable development and should be granted planning permission.