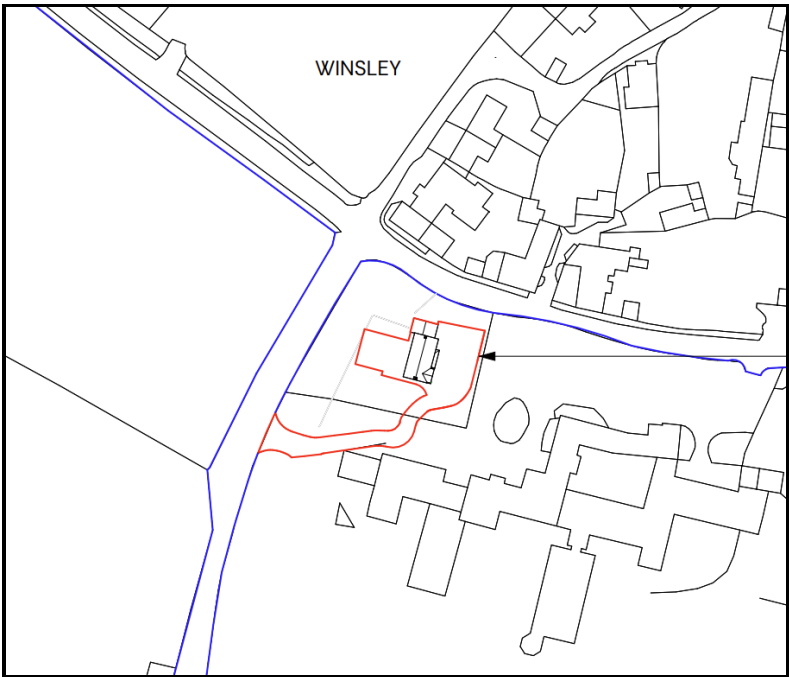


APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION

DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/08704
APPLICATION TYPE:	Full Planning Permission
SITE ADDRESS:	Nicholson House, 43c, Winsley, Bradford On Avon, BA15 2LE
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Double storey rear extension and internal alterations
RECOMMENDATION:	That Planning Permission be GRANTED



PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks planning permission for a double storey rear extension to a building associated with the Hospice Care facility of Dorothy House. The extension would provide additional desk space for the family support team, a teaching space for staff, three consultation rooms, and other associated accessibility features.

SITE DESCRIPTION / CONTEXT

Nicholson House is a two-storey detached building with a residential appearance, constructed in traditional form with Bath stone elevations and dark brown roof tiles, reflecting the local vernacular. The building is positioned within a self-contained plot and currently accommodates a range of functions with limited dedicated facilities to support the day-to-day operations of Dorothy House. The site lies within the Winsley Settlement Boundary and is designated as a Special Landscape Area (SLA7) under a reserved condition of the former West Wiltshire District Plan. It is also located within the West Wiltshire Green Belt and the Winsley Conservation Area. The site is bordered by a Grade II listed garden wall, contributing to its historic and landscape context.

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

- West Wiltshire Green Belt
- Winsley Conservation Area (CA/W/229)
- Dorthy House Garden Wall – Grade II (1434264)
- 115 Winsley Village – Grade II (1021918)
- Bechstein 1.5km SAC Parcel Buffer
- GHS 4km SAC Parcel Buffer
- GHS 4km Core Roost Buffer
- LHS 2km Core Roost Buffer
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (sFRA) no surface or groundwater flood risk
- Winsley Settlement Boundary (Larger Village)
- Special Landscape Area (SLA7)

PLANNING HISTORY

Reference No.	Proposal / Summary	Decision
W/92/01487/FUL	Extension and alterations to form hospice	Approved
W/97/01364/FUL	Extension to hall replacement implement shed parking (revised application)	Approved
W/98/00953/FUL	Overspill car park and landscaping	Approved
W/97/01363/FUL	Vehicular access erection of timber gates and implement shed	Approved

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Wiltshire Core Strategy:

Core Policy 1	Settlement Strategy;
Core Policy 2	Delivery Strategy;
Core Policy 7	Spatial Strategy: Bradford on Avon Community Area;
Core Policy 49	Protection of Rural Services and Community Facilities;
Core Policy 50	Biodiversity and Geodiversity;
Core Policy 51	Landscape;
Core Policy 57	Ensuring High-Quality Design and Place Shaping;
Core Policy 58	Ensuring Conservation of the Historic Environment;
Core Policy 60	Sustainable Transport;
Core Policy 61	Transport and Development;
Core Policy 64	Demand Management;
Core Policy 67	Flood Risk;

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Wiltshire Design Guide

The Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026: Car Parking Strategy (March 2015).

The Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) (March 2025)

Emerging Policy – Wiltshire Local Plan Review

The Council's emerging Local Plan has reached Regulation 24 stage, and is progressing through examination but the emerging plan carries limited weight at this stage with the hearing sessions currently being paused.

- Policy 1 Settlement Strategy
- Policy 85 Sustainable construction and low carbon energy
- Policy 88 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Policy 89 Biodiversity Net Gain
- Policy 95 Flood Risk
- Policy 98 High Quality Design and Place Shaping

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Winsley Parish Council – Objects and expressed concern that the development includes an increase in staff and considers that current parking facilities have not been evidenced to meet the requirement.

Local Highway Authority (Wiltshire Council) – No Objection

Ecology (Wiltshire Council) – No Objection (subject to conditions)

List of conditioned plans and documents, and prior commencement biodiversity enhancement proposals.

Public Protection (Wiltshire Council) – No Objection (subject to condition)

Condition to limit the hours of construction.

Arboriculture (Wiltshire Council) – No Objection

REPRESENTATIONS

No third party comments 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 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.

Core Policy 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy states that, within defined limits, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the 'large village' level. Winsley is categorised as a large village, and the area of proposed development is contained within the settlement boundary. It is however noted that the application site plan includes an area for the provision of biodiversity net gain which sits outside of the settlement boundary, however no development is proposed within this area and as such it does not contribute to the principle of the development consideration.

The proposal is considered acceptable in principle and will be considered further throughout the following report.

Green Belt

The NPPF at paragraph 153 states that "*when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness*". It goes on to state that "*inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances*". Paragraph 154 establishes that development would not be considered inappropriate where (c) it would comprise an extension or alteration of a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. The NPPF does not define "disproportionate" numerically. As a result, interpretation rests on case law, local policies, and practical judgement—particularly on volume, floor area, massing, visual impact, and cumulative effect.

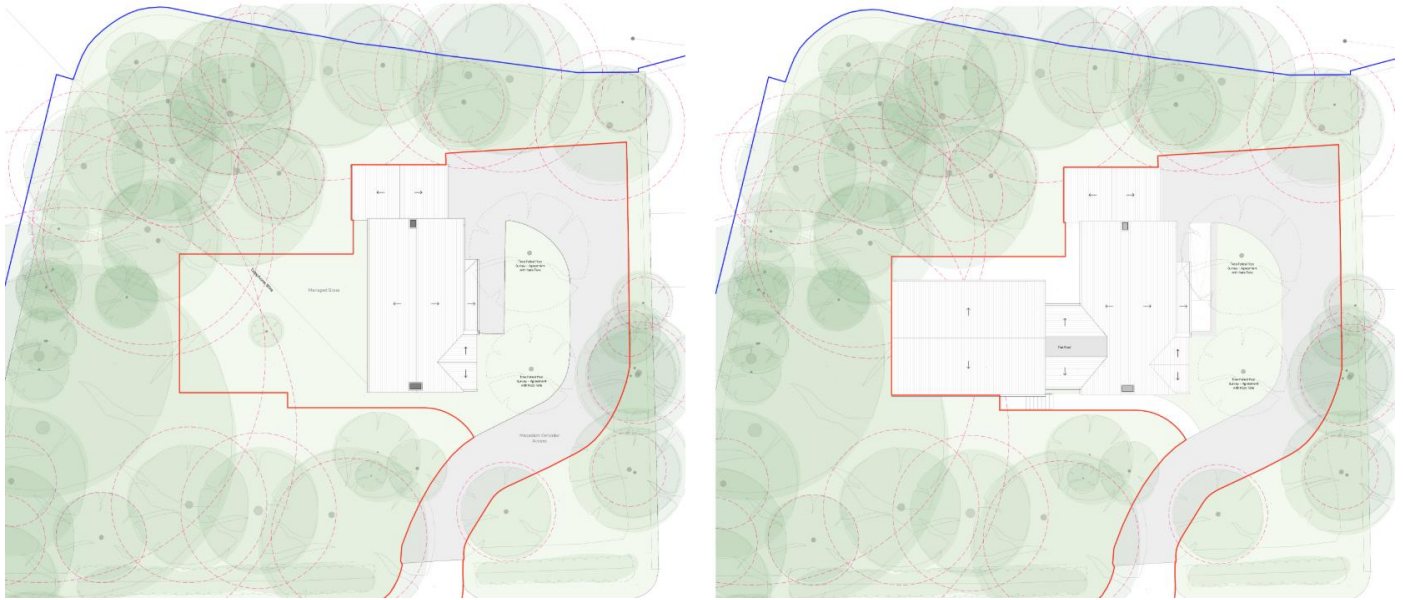
The existing building has a cubic content of 537.7m³ and the resultant development would have a cubic content of 1060.3 m³. This amounts to a volumetric increase of 97.2%. Although the Wiltshire Core Strategy does not outline a specific figure, other local authorities have outlined a figure of up to 50% (Gelding Borough Council Position Statement on Green Belt Policy LPD 13), and previous appeal examples exist for context, such as St Albans (03/04/1998, DCS No. 050-000-244) where an extension to a Green Belt bungalow resulting in an 80% increase in floorspace was deemed not disproportionate by the Inspector.

While the proposed extension represents a 97.2% increase in cubic content, it is not considered disproportionate in the context of the site's established use as a hospice. The functional character of a hospice necessarily informs the scale and form of any supporting development; although such an extension might appear substantial when compared to a typical dwelling, in this case it represents an appropriately scaled and purpose-driven addition that remains in keeping with the nature of the existing use.

The impact of the development on the openness of the Green Belt would also be limited by the dense tree cover surrounding the site, which significantly restricts external visibility. As a result, the extension would give rise to little, if any, perceived visual harm, given that the building would largely remain screened from public vantage points.

It is again noted that the Council does not operate a specific policy setting out quantitative thresholds for determining whether an extension is disproportionate. In the absence of such guidance, the assessment appropriately turns on the qualitative relationship between the proposal, the host building, and the existing lawful use.

The proposal has also been designed to respect the scale of the existing building, exceeding its dimensions only in width by 1.2 metres and remaining within or below all other established parameters. This approach helps ensure that the development reads as a well-integrated addition. Finally, the development would not conflict with any of the five purposes of including land within the Green Belt, as set out in paragraph 143 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Taking all these factors into account, the proposed extension is therefore not inappropriate development within the Green Belt.



Existing and Proposed Site Plan

Design and Impact upon the upon the character and context of the area

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.

Policy 98 of the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan reiterates the position outlined in Core Policy 57, that new development must enhance local distinctiveness, and relate positively to its landscape setting, as well as demonstrating a positive response to existing townscape and built form features such as height, scale, massing, building line, materials, and appearance.

Core Policy 51 of the WCS states that development should conserve and protect existing landscape character. It additionally states that local features such as hedgerows and watercourses must be considered as part of any analysis, as well as other matters which relate to the overall distinctive quality of the specific locality in question.

The proposed extension will use buff-coloured brickwork to complement the Bath stone of the existing building, with clay pantile roofing matching the host dwelling. Fenestration will be anthracite grey, and rainwater goods will be dark grey UPVC, consistent with existing roof and guttering tones. While the window colour differs from the current white frames, this is considered acceptable given the darker elements already present and the significant boundary screening, ensuring the materials form a coherent palette.

Architectural drawings of the proposed building, including North, East, South, and West elevations. The drawings show a two-story brick building with a central entrance, multiple windows, and a flat roof. The North Elevation shows a side view with a large window and a door. The East Elevation shows a front view with a central entrance and a large window. The South Elevation shows a side view with a large window and a door. The West Elevation shows a front view with a central entrance and a large window. The drawings are labeled "North Elevation - Proposed", "East Elevation - Proposed", "South Elevation - Proposed", and "West Elevation - Proposed".

The site contains high-amenity A- and B-category trees within the Winsley Conservation Area, requiring clear and detailed arboricultural measures. Expected information included precise methods for all works within RPAs, confirmation of hand-operated access only, defined excavation and foundation techniques, identification of a qualified Arboricultural Clerk of Works with reporting procedures, and a BS5837:2012-compliant tree survey with clear RPA encroachment calculations. The Arboriculture Officer has confirmed that the details submitted satisfy these requirements and as such accord with Core Policy 51.

Conservation and Heritage

Core Policy 58 outlines development consideration with regard to the historic environment. The policy states that heritage assets and their settings must be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced through any proposed development. Policy 99 of the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan outlines the need to conserve and protect heritage assets, and ensure that where proposals would affect historic environment, no harm would result. Paragraphs 199–202 of the NPPF require that proposals affecting heritage assets, including conservation areas and listed buildings, assess the significance of those assets and avoid harm to their character or setting.

The host building and proposed extension have a modern appearance and do not contribute to the character of the Winsley Conservation Area. The Grade II listed garden wall adjacent to the site would not be harmed, as the extension is positioned away from the asset, is screened by dense boundary vegetation, and would only be partially visible from within the garden. Similarly, views of the listed building opposite are screened, and the extension's design and materials are consistent with the existing structure, resulting in a neutral impact.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered acceptable and compliant with Core Policy 58 and the NPPF, as it preserves the significance of nearby heritage assets.



Application site, conservation area, and listed buildings

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, stresses that planning decisions should ensure developments provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

The proposed extension is located approximately 30 metres from the nearest neighbouring dwellings. It benefits from substantial screening provided by dense boundary vegetation and a high garden wall, which together ensure that the development would not appear overbearing or result in overshadowing of adjacent properties. Furthermore, the extension would not introduce any opportunities for overlooking or loss of privacy, as views are contained within the site.

The proposal is appropriately sited, designed, and oriented to ensure that it would not result in unacceptable impact upon/to the amenities or living conditions of neighbouring residential occupiers, particularly in terms of outlook, privacy, or access to natural light.



Site Visit External North and West Elevations

The proposal therefore accords with Core Policy 57 point vii in respect of safeguarding residential amenity and Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide.

Transport and Highways

Core Policy 60 of the WCS states that Council will support and encourage safe and efficient movement of people and, where necessary, mitigate the impact of development on transport users and local communities. Core Policy 61 specifies that development should demonstrate that consideration has been given to a hierarchy of transport users and that proposals must, where relevant, serve as a safe access to the highway network. Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states 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, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios”*.

The WCS, through Core Policy 64, outlines the need for development to comply with a minimum level of parking standards. This is further discussed through the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan, and policy PS4 which identifies that new parking private non-residential developments should not exceed maximum standards, with actual provision negotiated based on accessibility, transport options, site context, and local circumstances.

The applicant has advised that the proposed development would not generate additional staff-related vehicle movements, as the new facilities within Nicholson House would accommodate the relocation of existing Dorothy House employees currently working in unsuitable accommodation elsewhere on the site, rather than introduce new members of staff.

They furthermore clarify that references to “22 FTE” in the application form relate only to the number of new desk spaces, not new employees. The applicant states that the existing Winsley site operates ten inpatient units alongside day-patient and therapeutic services and currently employs 102 FTE and 201 PTE staff, most of whom travel sustainably through car-sharing, cycling or walking.

They submit that the site already contains 187 parking spaces and that the main car park typically operates at around 50% capacity, with no history of overspill parking onto the public highway. The applicant further confirms that the new training facilities are intended solely for internal staff use and will not be opened to external visitors.

The Council highway officer has reviewed the submitted information and confirmed that the development proposal raises no highway objection.

In light of this highway advice, the proposal is considered to accord with Core Policies 60, 61, and 64. The scheme is also consistent with paragraph 116 of the NPPF as the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety and residual cumulative impacts on the road network would not be severe.

Accordingly, the development is deemed to comply with relevant local and national transport policy and is overall considered acceptable in terms of its impacts on the highway network and site-related transport movements.

Ecology Interests

The WCS, through Core Policy 50, states that development proposals are expected to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) was established as a mandatory aspect of planning evaluation through Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Environment Act 2021 Schedule 14).

Policy 88 of the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan notes that development proposals must clearly demonstrate how the mitigation hierarchy has been sequentially applied, and additionally how they will incorporate protections for features of nature conservation value. The policy further reinforces the requirement for development to avoid disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats, and to identify measures which would do enable this for the lifetime of the development.

Comments were provided by the Council's Ecology Officer which considered that the site lies within four core roost consultation zones for Greater and Lesser Horseshoe bats associated with the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon SAC. A test of likely significance under Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 was undertaken and concluded that, given the scale and nature of the proposal, the absence of significant vegetation removal, and no external lighting, there is no mechanism for adverse impact on the SAC's Conservation Objectives. The proposal was therefore screened out of Appropriate Assessment.

With regard to protected species, while historic bat roost records exist within 200m of the site, the officer noted that the habitat offers limited connectivity and value for foraging or commuting bats. Only two small trees are proposed for removal, with the remainder retained, and the building itself assessed as having negligible roosting potential. No further surveys are considered to be required, subject to adherence to precautionary working methods outlined in the applicant's bat survey report.

In accordance with the NPPF and Core Policy 50, biodiversity enhancements should be secured by condition. Furthermore, the development is subject to the statutory requirement to deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. A Biodiversity Gain Plan condition will apply and submitted baseline and post-development metric calculations have been accepted as accurate.

The applicant has advised that survey work indicates negligible potential for bats to be present or harmed by the proposed development, with no evidence of roosting, no viable access points, and limited suitable habitat in the surrounding area. However, in accordance with Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, which requires development to protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity, the Council's Ecology Officer has recommended that a planning condition be imposed to secure ecological enhancements and ensure precautionary measures are carried out. Although the risk to protected species is considered low, the presence of nesting bird habitat and the wider context of protected species records within 2km means that the development must still deliver appropriate mitigation and biodiversity gains. As such, prior to the commencement of any works—including vegetation removal or demolition—the applicant will be required to submit details of ecological enhancements, such as the number, design and location of bird and bat boxes, for approval by the local planning authority. These approved measures must then be installed before the occupation of the final works. This condition is necessary to ensure that biodiversity is adequately protected and enhanced, consistent with policy requirements and best ecological practice.

Flooding and Drainage

Core Policy 67 of the WCS provides detail on the management of flooding in association with new development. Policy 95 of the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan directs new development to the requirement for a sequential test, as outlined by the NPPF. The policy states that new development will include measures to reduce rainwater run-off, and the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems. The NPPF sets out the application of a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of new development in paragraph 172.

The site is located in flood zone 1 at the lowest risk of fluvial flooding and low risk of surface water or ground water flooding on site, and it is assumed that the proposal uses the existing drainage system which, in absence of any concerns, appears to be operating well. Given the lack of any identified flooding risk to the site, it is considered that a sequential test would not be required. The works are moderate in nature amounting to an increase of impermeable surface area of 107.5m² which overall would not be significant or considered to cause harm. It is considered that the development is in accordance with CP67 and the details contained in the NPPF.

CONCLUSION

The proposal is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with the relevant policies and guidance outlined above.

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:

Proposed Site Plan 2513-NVB-XX-00-DR-A-00011-S2-P03
Proposed Elevations 2513-NVB-XX-ZZ-DR-A-03010-S2-P03
Proposed First Floor Plan 2513-NVB-XX-01-DR-A-01101-S2-P03
Proposed Ground Floor Plan 2513-NVB-XX-00-DR-A-01001-S2-P03
Proposed Roof Plan 2513-NVB-XX-02-DR-A-01201-S2-P03
Location Plan 2513-NVB-XX-00-DR-A-00001-S2-P03
Design & Access Statement 2513-NVB-XX-XX-RP-A-09000-A-S2
Arboricultural Impact Statement and Method Statement Revision C
Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
BNG Statutory Metric
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Preliminary Roost Assessment

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

3. Prior to the commencement of any works, including vegetation removal and demolition, details of the number, design and locations of ecological enhancements – such as nest box(es) for birds and bats shall be submitted to the local authority for approval. The approved details shall be implemented before occupation of the final works.

REASON: To provide mitigation/enhancement for biodiversity.

4. No construction or demolition work associated with the development hereby approved shall take place on Sundays or Public Holidays or outside the hours of 0800 to 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays.

REASON: Core policy 57, Ensuring high design and place shaping such that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable.

INFORMATIVE

There is a low risk that bats may occur at the development site. Many species of bat depend on buildings for roosting, with each having its own preferred type of roost. Most species roost in crevices such as under ridge tiles, behind roofing felt or in cavity walls and are therefore not often seen in the roof space. Bat roosts are protected all times by the Conservation of Habitats and Species 2017 (as amended) even when bats are temporarily absent because, being creatures of habit, they usually return to the same roost site every year. Planning permission for development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation or substitute for the need to obtain a bat licence if an offence is likely. If bats or evidence of bats is found during the works, the applicant is advised to stop work and follow advice from an independent ecologist or the applicant is advised to follow the advice of a professional ecologist or to contact Natural England's Batline through the internet.