

APPLICATION FOR HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING PERMISSION DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/08946
APPLICATION TYPE:	Householder planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	4 The Ridge, Bradford on Avon, BA15 1BS
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Replacement of rooflight with dormer and installation of rooflight (amended plans)
RECOMMENDATION:	That Planning Permission be GRANTED

SITE CONTEXT

No.4 (the 'site') is a residential plot occupying the northern corner of The Ridge – a small residential cul-de-sac off Woolley Drive. The Ridge is located in the northeastern area of Bradford on Avon (designated as a Market Town in the Core Strategy).

The plot is occupied by a modern house and its associated amenity space. The house was constructed in the early 2000s along with the rest of The Ridge. The house is a detached chalet-style property comprising the 1½ storey main pitched-roof range with a front gable over the carport, modest front gable dormer and a sizeable secondary pitched-roof range projecting to the rear. Its external materials primarily comprises coursed reconstituted stone walling, some red brickwork and timber cladding and concrete tile roofing.

The site is adjoined by the following land uses:

- North: The garden of 32 Woolley Drive – a modern bungalow.
- East: Ingledene, Coronation Avenue – a traditional two-storey house with a modern single-storey extension.
- South: 3 The Ridge – a modern chalet-style property.
- West: The private shared access of The Ridge and 14 Woolley Drive – a modern two-storey property.

The site is subject to the following planning designations:

- Bath & Bradford on Avon Bat Special Area of Conservation GHS 4km Core Roost Buffer: Combined Winsley Sites
- Bath & Bradford on Avon Bat Special Area of Conservation GHS 4km Core Roost Buffer: Winsley/Murhill Rift
- Bath & Bradford on Avon Bat Special Area of Conservation GHS 4km Core Roost Buffer: Combined Gripwood Sites
- LHS 2km Core Roost Buffer: Belcombe Court
- LHS 2km Core Roost Buffer: Carpenter's Shop, Kingston Mills, BoA
- Bath & Bradford on Avon Bat Special Area of Conservation GHS 4km SAC parcel buffer: Bath & Bradford on Avon Bats

PROPOSAL

The proposal originally sought planning permission for the replacement of the existing southeast-facing rooflight on the secondary rear range with a box dormer featuring a clear-glazed windows.

Following discussions with officers, revised plans have been submitted and the proposal now seeks permission for the same box dormer, albeit now with part obscured glazed windows, only the upper portion of which are openable, in addition to the insertion of a new rooflight on the north elevation which has been sited and sized to comply with Building Regulations for fire escape windows. The external materials of the dormer includes timber cladding to match the front dormer and a membrane roof covering.

PLANNING HISTORY

Relevant Planning Records			
Reference	Description	Decision	Date
W/99/01754/FUL	Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of 4 retirement homes	Refused	10/02/2000
W/00/01776/FUL	Construction of 4 dwellings	Approved	08/02/2001
W/01/00516/FUL	Construction of 4 dwellings (amended details)	Approved	05/07/2001

It should be noted that Planning Permission 01/00516/FUL (which has been implemented) is subject to the following condition withdrawing some permitted development rights:

6. *Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (and as amended by subsequent Orders), and in order to enable the Local Planning Authority to ensure that future development does not take place, which might result in overdevelopment of the site or to the detriment to nearby residents, there shall be no extensions, the garages shall not be used as additional living accommodation for the dwelling and no further windows shall be inserted in the roof, or any other development normally permitted under Schedule 2 [Permitted development rights], Part 1 [Development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse], Classes A-D [A – enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse, B – additions etc to the roof of a dwellinghouse, C – other alterations to the roof of a dwellinghouse, D – porches] of the aforementioned Order without the grant of further planning permission by the Local Planning Authority.*

RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Development Plan:

- Wiltshire Core Strategy (Adopted January 2015):
 - Core Policy 57: Ensuring high quality design and place shaping
- The Bradford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2026 (Made October 2017):

- Policy BE1 (relates to local distinctiveness and sense of place)
- Policy BE2 (relates to land use efficiency and character of the area)

Material Considerations:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024
 - Section 2. Achieving sustainable development
 - Section 12. Achieving well-designed places
- National Planning Practice Guidance
- National Design Guide
- Wiltshire Design Guide – Design Guidance for Householder Extensions
- Wiltshire Local Plan Submission Draft 2020-2038 (Regulation 24):
 - Policy 98: Ensuring high quality design and place shaping

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Bradford on Avon Town Council: No objection.

REPRESENTATIONS

Bradford on Avon Preservation Trust: No comment.

Two other third party comments have been received in relation to the original plans. Both comments raise concerns over the potential increase in overlooking resulting in a loss of privacy. One comment also raised concerns over construction access, timings and any potential damage.

Following the publication of the amended plans, two fresh representations were received from the same concerned parties.

One comment queried why the top windows above the frosted panes could not be openable – for clarification, the top windows are openable.

The second comment maintained an objection on the basis that the revised plans had not done enough to address the previous concerns. They also requested that due regard be had to the removal of permitted development rights for dormers (as set out in the Planning History section) – these matters are addressed in the Assessment: Residential Amenity and Other Matters sections below.

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
- Residential amenity
- Other matters

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.

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.

Policy BE1 of the made Bradford on Avon Neighbourhood Plan states that development should reinforce local distinctiveness, help create a sense of place and respond positively to its immediate and wider context, including in respect of materials palette.

Policy BE2 states that development should make efficient use of land and respect the character of the area.

The proposed box dormer is a modest addition that comfortably sits in from the rear elevation and down from the ridge. In this capacity, it reads as a tertiary addition that is subservient to both the main and secondary rear ranges. The box form is appropriate given the rear siting of the dormer away from the street scene. The external cladding proposed matches that of the front gable and dormer which is acceptable and the membrane roof covering is appropriate to the modern materials palette of the property.

Having regard to the above, the proposed design solution is considered to be 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, Neighbourhood Plan Policies BE1 and BE2 and the Wiltshire Design Guide.

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 privacy, natural lighting, outlook and pollution sources. This requirement is carried forward in draft Policy 98.

The Design Guide states 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.

Privacy:

No.4 has a close relationship with the surrounding properties. This was acknowledged in the officer reports for applications W/00/01776/FUL and W/01/00516/FUL under which the original dwelling was approved and amended and is the reason why this fresh application is submitted following the removal of permitted development rights, including Class B (additions etc to the roof of a dwellinghouse).

The dormer as originally proposed featured openable clear glazed windows directly facing towards no.3 and collectively measuring circa 1.7m wide by 1.05m high (with a glazed area of circa 1.1sqm).

Public representations were received raising concerns over the potential of the originally proposed dormer to generate a significant level of additional overlooking of the private gardens and, in the case of those properties along Coronation Avenue, the rear-facing habitable room windows, of neighbouring properties.

Officers shared those concerns and considered that, by reason of the forward siting of the dormer window, together with its vertical plane and larger size, it would increase the level of overlooking to an unacceptable degree beyond that already generated by the existing rooflight – for reference, the existing rooflight presents an equivalent clear glazed vertical plane of circa 0.2sqm+. It is also fully openable, allowing for unobstructed views at a minimum standing height of 1.5m, set back 1.1m from the face of the proposed dormer. Consequently, officers invited the applicant to consider an alternative design solution for the windows that maintained a level of outlook comparable to that of the existing rooflight.

In response, the applicant submitted amended plans which now propose that only the upper portion of the window would be clear glazed and openable (at a minimum standing height of 1.6m) while the lower portion would be obscured glazed and non-openable.

Officers are satisfied that this design solution would maintain a comparable level of outlook to the existing rooflight and have applied a condition that the obscured glazing be maintained in perpetuity.

However, it is acknowledged that this revision would leave the bedroom with limited outlook and without a window opening sufficient to comply with Building Regulations for fire escape windows (which requires a minimum opening of 0.33sqm with the lower window edge no

higher than 1.1m above the internal floor level). The applicant has therefore proposed the installation of a Building Regulations-compliant rooflight on the northwest elevation.

Officers are satisfied that, by reason of its setback siting, modest size and shallow plane, it would maintain the privacy of 32 Woolley Drive to the north to acceptable degrees.

Natural lighting and outlook:

Owing to the siting of the dormer (which is set back 0.4m from the rear elevation of the secondary range), the consistent building line and orientation of nos.3 and 4 and the northern siting of no.4 in relation to no.3, the dormer would have no impact on the natural lighting and outlook of no.3.

The dormer presents a blank side aspect to No.32 Woolley Drive and there would be a separation of 12.5m between this blank aspect and the ground floor windows of no.32 (which sits on higher ground than the site).

The Wiltshire Council Design Guide does not set any standards for a back-to-blank wall relationship and applying the 20m back-to-back standard would be disproportionate in this instance given the less sensitive back-to-blank wall relationship and low height of the dormer relative to the ground floor of no.32.

However, there are multiple examples of similar best practice guidance advocating for a minimum back-to-blank wall separation of 10-15m.

In addition, paragraph 2.1.6 of the BRE Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight (referenced in the Design Guide) advises that, in general, where development does not obstruct a vertical 25-degree line taken from the centre of a habitable room window of the affected property, the room should maintain a reasonable level of daylight.

Officers have assessed that the proposed dormer would not obstruct a vertical 25-degree line measured from the centre of the closest habitable room window of no.32.

Therefore, owing to the siting and low scale of the dormer, the circa 12.5m separation between the closest point of the dormer and the rear windows of no.32 and as it would not obstruct a vertical 25-degree line from said windows, it is considered that the dormer would not have a significant impact on the natural lighting and outlook of no.32.

For similar reasoning, the proposal would also maintain the natural lighting and outlook of Ingledene.

Having regard to the above, 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), draft Policy 58 and the Design Guide.

Other Matters

Officers acknowledge neighbour concerns in respect of the potential of the construction process to cause access disruption, noise pollution and damage and the following commentary is provided.

Construction access:

Given the very modest scale of the development, it is considered that deliveries would cause relatively minimal disruption and once materials have been delivered, the owner/contractors could park as normal.

Construction noise:

The standard Wiltshire Council guidance recommends construction activities (including in residential areas) are undertaken Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm and Saturday 8am to 1pm with no working on Sundays and Bank holidays.

Given the site context, it is considered that these timings are acceptable and further information is available at: [Noise information - Wiltshire Council](#).

Construction damage:

The potential of the construction process to cause damage is a civil matter. Nonetheless, officers have advised that the applicant carefully monitors the construction process in order to minimise any risk of damage.

CONCLUSION

The proposed box dormer is acceptable in terms of design and, following the submission of amended plans, maintains the adequate levels of privacy for neighbouring properties comparable to the existing rooflight. It also maintains adequate levels of natural lighting and outlook. The new rooflight is also acceptable in terms of design and residential amenity.

Consequently, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in respect of design, residential amenity and all other matters and therefore complies with the aforementioned policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, emerging Wiltshire Local Plan, Bradford on Avon 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: TQRQM25322154718965

- Site plan, ref: TQRQM25322161135342
- Floor plans, ref: 01/03
- Roof and boundary plans, ref: 03/03
- Elevations, ref: 02/03

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 unless otherwise stated on the approved plans.

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

4. Before the development hereby permitted is first brought into use, the three lower windowpanes indicated on the submitted Elevations drawing no.02/03 shall be glazed with obscure (privacy) glass to an obscurity level of no less than level 3 and shall be non-opening. The lower windowpanes shall be permanently maintained as non-opening units with obscure glazing in perpetuity.

REASON: In the interests of residential amenity and privacy.