

APPLICATION FOR HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING PERMISSION DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCE:	PL/2025/09506
APPLICATION TYPE:	Householder planning permission
SITE ADDRESS:	8 Mount Pleasant, Chippenham, SN14 6LQ
DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:	Proposed front/side and rear extension with internal alterations to main dwelling. Erection of detached double garage, formation of driveway/access with drop kerbs and erection of self-contained single storey annexe.
RECOMMENDATION:	That Planning Permission be REFUSED

PROPOSAL

The scheme seeks planning permission for a proposed front/side and rear extension with internal alterations to the main dwelling, the formation of a driveway/access with dropped kerbs, the erection of a detached double garage and the erection of a self-contained single storey annexe within grounds to the rear of the dwelling.

The application is submitted using Householder application forms. The various elements of the proposal are separated to discuss in specific detail below.

Main Dwelling



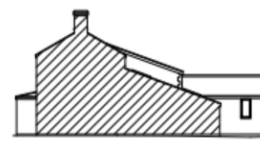
EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION



EXISTING SIDE ELEVATION



EXISTING REAR ELEVATION



EXISTING SIDE ELEVATION

Existing Elevations



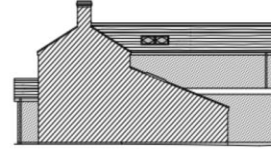
PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION

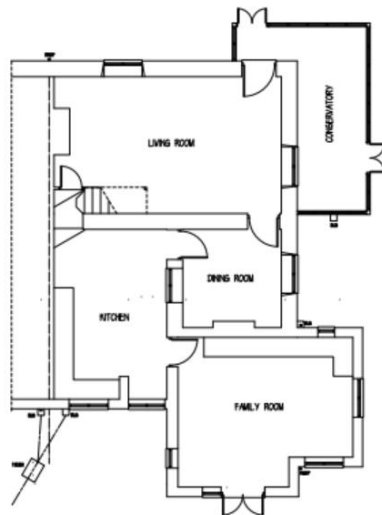


PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION

Proposed Elevations

The existing two storey dwelling includes a wraparound front and side conservatory at ground floor level, together with a rear projecting family room. The conservatory and family room together create a recessed section along the side elevation, onto which the dining room currently faces. The first floor does not extend across the full footprint above the ground floor and accommodates two bedrooms and a bathroom.

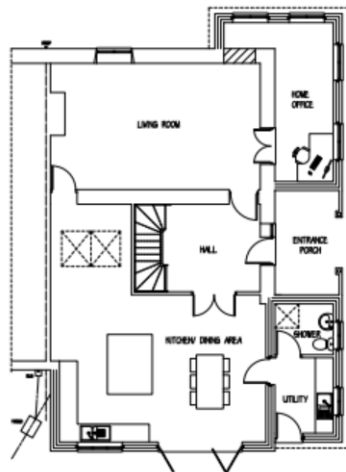
The proposed development includes the removal of the existing front and side conservatory and part of the rear family room. The front elevation will still incorporate a forward-projecting ground floor element, which will wrap around to the side in the form of a -lean-to- extension that extends to be flush with the rear end wall. This will provide a home office to the front, a repositioned entrance porch, utility room and ground floor bathroom. Internal reconfiguration will enable the relocation of the staircase and the formation of an enlarged kitchen and dining area. At first floor level, a partial extension will facilitate the creation of a third bedroom to the rear of the property. The rear element of the extension is designed to follow the established rear building line, resulting in no overall increase to the existing projection.



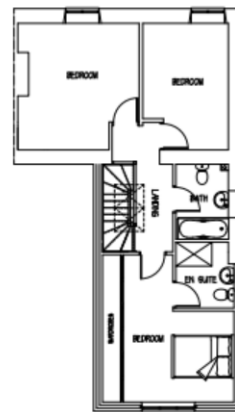
EXISTING GROUND FLOOR LAYOUT



EXISTING FIRST FLOOR LAYOUT



PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR LAYOUT



PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR LAYOUT

The existing property currently features a pitched roof, whilst the proposal introduces a rear projecting gable. To the rear, the extension comprises a combination of single storey and two storey elements, whilst the proposed built form will include a flat roofed- section on the left side which then transitions into a gently sloping roof that will terminate just below the main eaves, with 2 dormer window windows proposed on the roof slope.

Following the removal of the conservatory, two casement windows will be introduced at ground floor level to the front elevation. The west (side) elevation will incorporate additional ground

floor windows to serve the new extension, with two casement windows above at first floor level. The east elevation will feature two rooflights set within the first floor sloping roof. To the rear, the proposal includes a ground floor casement window positioned alongside full height- bifold doors, with a further first floor casement window serving the new bedroom.

The existing building is constructed from stone with stone quoins and a tiled roof, with the proposed materials noted as off-white render finish to the single storey front, side and rear with clay double roman roof tiles to match the existing.

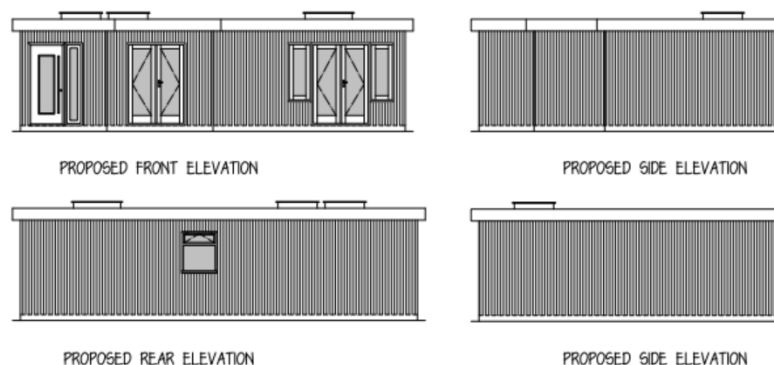
Garage and Access

The double garage is proposed to be situated within the western portion of the existing rear amenity area, positioned on land previously occupied by scrub vegetation where initial groundworks have already commenced to remove some of the established landscaping. The structure comprises a modest, single storey, flat roofed building which includes a single garage door to the front elevation, with a window and an access door to the side elevation, whilst no fenestration is proposed to the other side or rear elevation. Externally, the garage is proposed to be finished in an off-white render that is consistent with that proposed for the existing dwelling.

Access to the garage will be enabled by the creation of the driveway alongside the western boundary adjacent to the main dwelling, served by a proposed dropped kerb. Fronting the garage is an area of hardstanding to be utilised for car parking and turning. The access will be finished with 20mm Down Newbury flint loose stone, whilst the positioning of the garage enables the area to the rear to be maintained as amenity space to serve the main dwelling.

Annexe

The proposed annexe comprises a single storey, flat roofed building incorporating a kitchen and living area, bathroom- and bedroom. The external finish is proposed to be timber cladding, with the incorporation of flat rooflights. The main fenestration is concentrated on the front elevation, facing inward towards the residential curtilage, with an additional window positioned on the rear elevation but with no proposed new openings to either side elevation. The annexe features a staggered front elevation, including a forward-projecting- porch and living area, and is sited at the furthestmost point of the rear garden adjacent to the rear boundary.



Proposed Annexe Elevations

SITE DESCRIPTION/CONTEXT

The site referred to as 8 Mount Pleasant is a two-storey semi-detached property situated within the principal settlement of Chippenham, situated set back from Bristol Road and opposite the Bumpers Farm roundabout. The property benefits from extensive amenity space to the rear of the property, with existing scrubland situated to the west of the main building with established planting and landscaping, however no trees within or adjacent to the site are subject to Tree Protection Orders. The property is constructed from stone with clay double roman tiles to the pitched roof. The site is identified as being in Flood Zone 1; however, the full site and surrounding areas are identified as having groundwater levels that are at, or very near (within 0.025m of) the ground surface. The surrounding area is characterised by a mixture of detached and semi-detached properties of varying appearance and construction materials, whilst the Chippenham Retail Park is situated due south.

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

- Countryside Character Areas – Avon Vales
- Historic Building Sites and Monuments Records – Farmstead at Mount Pleasant
- Groundwater levels are either at or very near (within 0.025m of) the ground surface
- Archaeology Monument Points – Site of Farmstead, Mount Pleasant

PLANNING HISTORY AT THE SITE

Proposal / Summary
PL/2024/07420 - Outline planning permission: All matters reserved Decision - Refuse Date: 2/10/2024 – Outline application for 2No. new build dwellings

RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

Wiltshire Core Strategy:

- Core Policy 10: Spatial Strategy for Chippenham Community Area
- Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
- Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Core Policy 51: Landscape
- Core Policy 60: Sustainable Transport
- Core Policy 61: Transport and New Development
- Core Policy 64: Demand Management
- Core Policy 67: Flood Risk

Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan:

- GI1: Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity
- GI5: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

Wiltshire Design Guide: Appendix D – Design Guidance for Householder extensions

Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 Car Parking Strategy

Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan 2008 (BAP)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

- Section 12: Achieving Well Designed Places
- Section 14: Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change
- Section 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

The Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide

ISSUES

- Principle of Development
- Design and Impact upon the upon the character and context of the area
- Residential Amenity
- Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Highways Impacts
- Flooding/Drainage

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Chippenham Town Council: Objection –

Outline planning permission was recently refused under PL/2024/07420 for two dwellings to be located in the rear garden of No. 8. One of the reasons for refusal was that the dwellings would not have responded positively to the existing built form of the area, would not have complemented the existing pattern of development or effectively integrated into the setting, and would have resulted in adequate living conditions for future occupiers. The timing and outcome of this refusal is a material consideration in the determination of the current application, particularly because the proposed annexe is in a similar location to the refused dwellinghouse. There are concerns in respect of the proposed 'self-contained' annexe building, namely containing all the rooms/services/facilities to enable independent living, its divorced siting (approx. 25m) from No. 8 and the ability for it to be accessed independently via the proposed vehicular access. For these reasons, the recent intention for a dwellinghouse in this location, and the lack of any information from the Applicant setting out how the annexe would be used and its relationship to the main house, the Town Council is not satisfied that the annexe would be ancillary to the main house and full planning permission would be required.

The depth of the proposed two storey rear extension may result in loss of light/outlook to the adjoining occupier at No. 7 Mount Pleasant and it is requested that the Case

Officer visit the site to assess this aspect.

Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide states 'External finishes, materials and architectural features will affect how your extension looks. Normally, the brick/stone/render colour/type and the mortar joints should match those of the existing house.' The proposed use of white render as a material finish on the proposed extensions would not be in keeping with the stone finish of the existing house, and it is requested that the material finish be amended to the local vernacular of stonework or brickwork. The proposed reconfiguration of the front door to the side of the house would also be at odds with the front door arrangement locally.

The proposed vehicular access may be too narrow for vehicles to comfortably use, particularly where it is only 2.35m in width. Even where the entrance porch is proposed to be located, the access would only be 2.8m in width. There are also some highway safety concerns regarding visibility splays of the proposed access, particularly as the public footway is a well-used route connecting the town to Allington. The Town Council defers to Wiltshire Council Highways for their comments on this aspect. There is no objection to the siting and scale of the proposed garage.

Review of the latest aerial photographs of the site/Google Streetview indicates that the site and/or adjoining land contains trees. Policy GI5 of the Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect existing trees, hedgerows or woodland and avoid removal wherever possible. The location and condition of existing trees is not known. A full tree survey should be submitted to ascertain whether there are any trees of arboricultural value. At present it is not possible to determine whether the proposed garage and annexe buildings could comfortably be accommodated on the site without encroachment into the root protection areas or canopy areas of any retained trees.

Given the above, the proposed annexe, would appear to be an independent planning unit and should be omitted from this application. The scale and materials of the proposed extensions to the main house would be out of keeping with the surrounding area contrary to CP57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the Wiltshire Design Guide and the NPPF. The proposal would likely result in the removal of, or harm to, existing trees on, or adjoining, the site contrary to Policy GI5 of the Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan.

Wiltshire Council Highways Officer: No objection subject to conditions –

The site has existing frontage onto Mount Pleasant, an unclassified section of public highway subject to a speed limit of 30mph. A new access is proposed to enable vehicle parking to the rear by virtue of a driveway to a proposed double garage structure.

In respect of access the proposals appear to provide narrow access (measured as some 2.35m) to the rear of the existing property with an area in which vehicles would be able to park/turn, allowing access and egress with the public highway in a forward gear. At the point of access with the public highway it would be required to demonstrate both vehicular and pedestrian visibility splays for the new access point in line with Manual for Streets, a 2.4m x 2.4m splay for pedestrians should be achieved and

visibility for vehicles on a setback of 2m should be demonstrated with a 43m splay to the east of the access. The west of the access has little traffic accessing through and ends in a turning head approximately 20m from the access, it should be demonstrated that this area would be visible from the access as a minimum. The specified splays should be kept clear of obstruction over 600mm.

The proposals would also see a rise in bedroom accommodation within the curtilage, the main dwelling would be increased to a 3-bedroom unit, and the annexe would have a further single bedroom. Due to the rise to 4 bedrooms within the curtilage there would be a requirement to provide 3 vehicle parking spaces in accordance with Wiltshire Councils minimum parking standard for residential development. This would be achieved by the provision of the double garage space and the hardstanding to the front of the garage, which would also enable turning. The double garage space would enable the storage of cycles and therefore no additional cycle storage would be required.

The proposals would not represent a significant impact on the surrounding public highway and therefore it is considered that no highway objection be raised subject to the following conditions and informative:

VISIBILITY TO BE DETAILED

No development shall commence on site until visibility splays have been provided between the edge of the carriageway and a line extending from a point 2metres back from the edge of the carriageway, measured along the centre line of the access, to the points on the edge of the carriageway 43 metres to the east and 20metres to the west from the centre of the access in accordance with plans to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Such splays shall thereafter be permanently maintained free from obstruction to vision above a height of 600mm above the level of the adjacent carriageway.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety.

PEDESTRIAN VISIBILITY SPLAY

The development hereby permitted shall not be first brought into use until splays have been provided on both its sides of the access to the rear of the existing footway based on coordinates of 2.4m x 2.4m. The splays shall always be kept free of obstruction above a height of 600mm.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety.

INFORMATIVE - VEHICLE CROSSOVERS

The application involves an extension to the existing/creation of a new vehicle access/dropped kerb. The consent hereby granted shall not be construed as authority to carry out works on the highway. The applicant is advised that a licence will be required from Wiltshire's Highway Authority before any works are carried out on any footway, footpath, carriageway, verge or other land forming part of the highway.

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was publicised by direct neighbour letter, and a total of 7 representations have been received. Comments received have been summarised below:

- I do not object to the principle of the proposed separate annexe, however, I have concerns regarding its siting and proximity to my boundary
- The annexe is too close and would risk loss of afternoon and evening sunlight, adversely affecting residential amenity.
- I respectfully request that the building be moved further forward within the plot and set at least 2 metres from the boundary,
- Concerns of the potential for future development or intensification, such as the addition of a higher roof or first-floor accommodation.
- Concerns that the issues raised during application PL/2024/07420 have not been considered
- Habitats and landscaping have already been removed from the vicinity
- Extension to the main building incorporating a second storey will impact on light and privacy with the introduction of a first floor window
- Any future increase in height to either the Annex or the double garage would result in unacceptable impacts to residential amenity
- In light of the refusal of a larger scheme on this site, it is essential that the current proposal does not facilitate the later creation of multiple dwellings through incremental change or planning by stealth
- Request that a restriction on any and all future development in this area is included in perpetuity in any planning approval
- No mention of emergency vehicle access to the rear of the property and the annexe with such a narrow driveway.
- Area of cleared land behind the properties of 24-28 Blackberry Close, raises concerns over any future proposed development.
- Concerns regarding the proposed access
- On the site plan, the proposed 'annex' is in fact wider than the main house
- Concerns regarding the roof form of the annexe and requests for the built form of both the garage and annexe to be flat roofs
- Concerns regarding the positioning of the annexe in close proximity to neighbouring boundaries
- Questions over the proposed use of the annexe

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.

Principle of Development

In most householder applications, the principle of development is not a matter for detailed assessment, as the residential use of the site is already established and the proposal typically involves minor works within the curtilage of a lawful dwelling.

When assessing proposals which include annexe accommodation, however, it is essential to determine whether the extent of development proposed genuinely represents ancillary accommodation, reliant on the host dwelling, or whether the development will result in accommodation that is self-contained and capable of functioning as an independent dwelling.

An annexe, as an appropriately ancillary provision, is not objectionable at the site; however, the Council would not support the formation of an independent dwelling/planning unit in the proposed annexe location.

In determining whether the accommodation is appropriately ancillary, consideration should be given to the presence of self-contained facilities such as a separate kitchen, bathroom, and independent access. These features may indicate a level of autonomy inconsistent with ancillary use. Where the proposed accommodation does not demonstrate a clear physical or functional relationship with the host dwelling, its inclusion on a householder application would not be in accordance with the terms of what has been applied for.

For this scheme, the following principle of development assessment will be made:

- What the physical relationship is: i.e. is it subordinate in scale, what is the proximity to the main dwelling, is it attached or detached, and how it integrates with the existing residential curtilage?
- What the functional relationship is: i.e. is the annexe intended for use by family members, does it share access, garden space, and/or utilities, and is dependent on the main house for day-to-day living such as provision of care.

The annexe is proposed as a free-standing flat-roof structure, proposed to be located within the established residential curtilage of the host dwelling, positioned at the far end of the rear garden adjacent to the boundaries of neighbouring dwellings north of the site. The scheme also proposes the creation of a driveway, running along the side of the host dwelling and providing off-street parking provision in the centre of the site, to serve both the dwelling and annexe. A garage is also proposed adjacent to this area of hardstanding.

The submitted plans do not indicate that there would be any division of the site by virtue of fences or walls and as such there is some degree of visual connection between the annexe, garage and host dwelling, and functional connection by virtue of the shared amenity space. It is, however, noted that the annexe is positioned at the furthestmost point of the rear garden, which creates a degree of visual separation by virtue of the distance between the two buildings.

Notwithstanding the likely parking and amenity connection, the description of development outlines that annexe would be 'self-contained' which indicates that there would be limited

further functional connection between the annexe and host dwelling; the capacity for the structure to be 'self-contained' is demonstrated on the floor plans by clearly showing the provision of porch, kitchen, living area, bedroom and en-suite.

No information has been provided as to who is intended to occupy the annexe, and no clear justification has been provided to indicate that the annexe facilities are necessary without prejudicing any true reliance on the main dwelling for day-to-day living.

The inclusion of the term 'self-contained annexe' within the description of development is misleading and incompatible with an ancillary use. The dedicated kitchen, bathroom and bedroom creates the capacity for separate occupation which results in a unit that can function as an independent dwelling rather than accommodation that is incidental or ancillary to the main dwelling. As such, the proposal conflicts with Core Policy 1 and 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the principles of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

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.

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. In addition, section 12 of the NPPF expects a good standard of design.

Each element of the proposal is discussed separately below.

Annexe

The overall scale and design of the annexe is considered acceptable. Being of single storey form with the flat roof, this restricts its overall height and therefore doesn't present as a dominant feature in its proposed location given its proximity to the neighbouring properties. Whilst the built form will be timber clad to the external walls with rooflights to the roof, it is not considered an incongruous or unsympathetic addition within the residential curtilage with the use of natural materials. Vantage points to the annexe from the main road will be minimised owing to being located at the furthestmost point of the rear garden and is not considered to impede upon the existing amenity space of the main dwelling.

Garage

The proposed single storey garage is also considered acceptable. Given the proposed design, form and siting, it is not considered to result in unacceptable visual impact. The built form

incorporates a flat roof which will restrict its height. Whilst it is proposed to utilise render to the external walls to match the proposed extension to the main dwelling, the garage will be positioned away from public view from the road given that its within a section of the garden obscured from view. The driveway leading to the garage is considered to be in an acceptable location which would not impinge upon the built form of the existing dwelling.

Main Dwelling

The proposed works to the main dwelling are considered acceptable. The removal of single storey- elements, including the front/side conservatory and the rear family room, will result in a more coherent and uniform footprint to the building. Although the main entrance is proposed to be relocated to the side elevation, the current entrance is positioned within the front conservatory and is therefore not as visually prominent when compared with neighbouring properties within the streetscene. While the development increases the overall footprint and introduces additional bulk at first floor- level, it is not considered to result in an unacceptable visual impact or an overdeveloped appearance. The proposed rear extension will introduce the rear projecting gable and a more prominent appearance as a result, however the scale and form of the proposed alterations are considered appropriate to the plot and in keeping with the character of the built environment. The inclusion of render to the external walls does introduce a different material to the existing palette of the dwelling, but is not considered to result in an incongruous appearance within the streetscene.

Having regard to the above, the proposal complies with the design principles set out in Core Policy 57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and Appendix D of the Wiltshire Design Guide.

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 annexe to the rear garden would be in close proximity to the boundaries with No's 20 and 22 Blackberry Close, to the north of the rear boundary, and also Encliffe to the east. The main dwelling is also semi-detached to No. 7 Mount Pleasant with No.9 Mount Pleasant to the west.

The annexe is proposed to be a single storey building with a flat roof. It is noted that the proposed positioning of the annexe is broadly the same as where one of the proposed dwellings under PL/2024/07420 was to be situated and concerns were raised previously as to the siting of a dwelling in such close proximity to the neighbouring properties. Subsequently, further representations have been received for this application which echo those concerns. Within the representations, requests were made for the annexe to be positioned further away from the neighbouring boundaries, whilst further concerns were raised regarding the potential loss of light and loss of privacy that will result from the annexe being built in this position, impacting residential amenity, and the potential for any future development of the annexe

being converted into a residential unit. Additionally, concerns were raised as to whether the access can adequately serve the dwelling and annexe. However comments also confirmed that a flat roofed structure would be more a more preferable built form in this location.

Whilst the annexe is proposed to be positioned at the rear of the garden in close proximity of neighbouring properties, in particular No. 20 and No.22 Blackberry Close and Encliffe, the flat roof design ensures that the overall massing remains low and unobtrusive-; unlikely to result in unacceptable overshadowing or loss of light to neighbouring occupants. The proposed fenestration will primarily overlook the residential curtilage as opposed to the shared boundaries, therefore the scheme is not considered to give rise to unacceptable levels of overlooking, loss of privacy, or overbearing impact upon neighbouring properties. Furthermore, as previously detailed, a residential unit within this location would not be considered acceptable and should any further application be submitted to include the annexe, conditions would be considered necessary to ensure that the building remains part of the same planning unit and ancillary to the main dwelling.

Concerns have been raised regarding the rear design of the first floor extension and that the inclusion of a first floor window to that elevation could result in loss of privacy by windows overlooking neighbouring boundaries. The proposed rear gable will introduce some additional massing to the rear; however, it is not considered to result in an overly dominant or unacceptable design feature. It is, however, noted that the existing rear elevation does not feature any first-floor windows and the inclusion of new windows will result in some change to neighbouring occupants sense of privacy.

Within the Wiltshire Design Guide, where development is for new dwellings, 20m back-to-back is the recommended distance between the walls of neighbouring dwellings in the interest of preventing overlooking and securing a degree of privacy for householders. Whilst this is a useful benchmark for assessing any scheme, extensions on existing houses that would result in a breach of this distance would not necessarily automatically indicate an unacceptable impact on residential amenity, and in some circumstances a distance in excess could still result in an unacceptable impact; each scheme must be assessed on its own merits and site-specific circumstances.

The existing back-to-back distance between the host dwelling and all neighbouring dwellings is in excess of 25m and even taking into account that the extension will reduce that distance marginally and new windows will offer the opportunity for views across to No.20 and No. 22, on this occasion, the distance between the properties to the rear will still be sufficient to ensure that the scheme does not likely result in unacceptable change to the existing levels of amenity enjoyed by neighbouring occupants.

Whilst first floor windows are also proposed to the side (west) elevation, these are to serve a bathroom and en-suite and it would therefore be considered necessary to impose a condition to ensure that the windows are either obscure glazed to an acceptable level of obscurity and/or fixed shut.

When considering the increase in bulk at first floor level, the overall built form will not be positioned closer to the boundaries with No. 7 or No.9 Mount Pleasant, with the provision of

the driveway also providing a buffer between No.9. Whilst the increase in first floor built form will be visible to both properties and the end wall extends beyond those of No.7 and No.9, it is not considered to result in any unacceptable overbearing or overshadowing.

Lastly, whilst the garage is to be positioned to the rear of the boundary with No.9 as well as to the rear of No.s 22, 24 and 26 Blackberry Close, it is a single storey structure with a flat roof, maintaining a low profile with no side windows overlooking the boundaries.

The proposed development has been assessed in terms of its potential impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties. On balance, the proposed works are not considered to result in any unacceptable impact to residential amenity. By reason of the scale, design and materials used, the proposed works are not considered to result in unacceptable overlooking, overshadowing, loss of light or loss of privacy. The distances to the neighbouring properties are considered sufficient to mitigate against any unacceptable impact on residential amenity given the single storey, flat-roof built form of both the annexe and garage, and the proposed built form of the main dwelling not encroaching upon the adjacent properties.

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

Highways Impact

Core Policy 57 (xiv) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that development must meet the requirements of Core Policy 61. This policy requires proposals to be capable of being served by safe access to the highway network. Core Policy 64 seeks to ensure compliance with parking standards set out in the Local Transport Plan.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Paragraph 115 and 116, requires that development proposals do not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety and that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users.

The proposal includes the provision of a driveway alongside the western boundary of the property, to serve a double garage located within the rear amenity space which will be facilitated by a proposed dropped kerb. Fronting the double garage is an area of hardstanding creating sufficient space for parking for a number of vehicles as well as adequate turning space.

The extension to the main dwelling will see the property increase from a 2 to a 3 bedroom dwelling, whilst the annexe includes a further bedroom, thereby totalling 4 bedrooms which would require the provision of a minimum of 3 parking spaces to comply with Wiltshire car parking standards. The double garage can accommodate 2 vehicles and when taking into account the hard standing area fronting the garage, it is considered that the site can accommodate the required parking to meet these standards. Wiltshire Council Highways raised no objection to the proposal, subject to conditions relating to vehicle crossovers and visibility splays, and therefore is considered that the proposed development would not result in any adverse impact on highway safety. Adequate parking and turning provision is provided in accordance with Wiltshire's adopted parking standards, and access arrangements are acceptable.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Core Policies 57 (xiv), 61 and 64 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the NPPF, and the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan.

Ecology Impact

Policy CP50 of the WCS identifies the need to protect Wiltshire's natural environment, including features that provide an ecological function for wildlife and requires development proposals to demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. CP50 further includes the requirement for all development to seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity, expressing that enhancement measures will contribute to the objectives and targets of the Wiltshire BAP (Biodiversity Action Plan)..

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in Paragraph 193, requires that development minimises impacts on biodiversity, including ensuring mitigation is secured where harm cannot be avoided.

Wiltshire's BAP includes the following observation relevant to the importance of gardens and allotments:

Gardens and allotments are of importance to a wide variety of species through provision of food, water, shelter and nesting sites. Where gardens contain features like ponds, they can support locally important populations of amphibians for example.

Policy GI1 of the Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan specifies ways in which features of significant biodiversity value should be retained and enhanced, including the following suggestion:

- (i) retain ancient trees and hedgerows and/or trees and hedgerows of arboricultural value, additional planting should extend tree cover.



The most recent aerial photographs available shows that there is a good level of cover provided by trees within the residential garden, and shows how the site is directly adjacent to woodland/scrub/hedgerows. The provided baseline habitat map (June 2024) submitted as part of the application PL/2024/07520 identified existing habitat features at the site which includes 2 ponds and multiple trees (including some annotated as dead). When conducting the site visit, Officers have observed that current groundworks being undertaken at the property have removed a large section of the woodland/scrub within the residential curtilage, as well as the removal of the ponds.

Natural England's dataset shows risk zones for Great Crested Newts (GCN) in Swindon and Wiltshire, and identifies the site as being within an amber risk zone for GCN.

At the time of writing, there have been no comments submitted from the Councils Ecology team. However, Planning Practice Guidance relevant to protected species and development (advice of local planning authorities) states that within habitats of ancient or veteran trees or those with significant decay, ponds or slow-flowing water bodies on the site and woodland, scrub and hedgerows on, or next to the site, it is considered that there is suitable habitat on the site that may support protected species such as bats, birds, badgers, dormice, invertebrates, GCN, reptiles and protected plants.

When considering the loss of the existing scrubland and vegetation site, together with the removal of the ponds, the provision of (at least) a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal would be reasonably necessary to enable the Local Authority to fully consider the proposed developments effects on protected species and their habitats.

No information has been provided within the application to address Ecology and protected species on site and therefore the proposed development fails to adequately demonstrate that it would avoid harm to biodiversity or deliver appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures. As such, it does not comply with the requirements to conserve and enhance ecological networks and protected species.

The proposal is therefore contrary to Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, which seek to protect and enhance the natural environment. The application must accordingly be refused on ecological grounds.

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.

Drainage and Flood Risk

Core Policy 67 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and paragraph 181 of the NPPF requires that all new development avoids increasing flood risk on-site or elsewhere and, where appropriate, incorporates sustainable drainage measures. Development must also comply with national policy on flood risk management and drainage design. Paragraph 176 (via footnote 62) of the

NPPF states that householder development should not be subject to the sequential test, nor the exception test.

The site is located within flood zone 1, however, the full site is classed as within the highest risk category for groundwater flooding, having been identified as having groundwater levels at, or very near (within 0.025m of) the ground surface.

The application does not include a Flood Risk Assessment or Drainage Report. The proposed development fails to demonstrate that it would not result in an increased risk of flooding or that adequate drainage measures are in place to serve the annexe and extended dwelling. As such, the application is contrary to Core Policy 67 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, particularly paragraph 181. The proposal is therefore unacceptable on flood risk and drainage grounds.

CONCLUSION

The proposal fails to demonstrate compliance with the relevant policies and guidance, with no information provided to address the potential presence of protected species on site or the risk of groundwater flooding and no overriding material considerations have been identified that would justify a departure from the development plan. Furthermore, the proposed annexe is considered capable of independent occupation and does not demonstrate a clear physical or functional relationship with the host dwelling and is therefore not considered to be ancillary accommodation.

The proposed development, by reason of the identified harm, is considered to conflict with the aims and objectives of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Accordingly, the application is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION: That Planning Permission be REFUSED for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development, by virtue of its scale, layout, provision of independent access and full range of self-contained facilities including kitchen and bathroom, is considered to be capable of independent occupation. It does not demonstrate a clear physical or functional relationship with the host dwelling and is therefore not considered to be ancillary accommodation. As such, the proposal is tantamount to the creation of a new dwelling, which is contrary to Core Policy 1 and 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the principles of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The application site is in an area with the highest risk category for groundwater flooding, identified as having groundwater levels at, or very near (within 0.025m of) the ground surface. The application fails to demonstrate that the site is at low risk of flooding, that flood risk will not be increased elsewhere and that there are not any

sequentially preferable sites for the proposed development. The proposal would conflict with the flood risk objectives, particularly those relating to the application of the sequential and exception tests. The scheme is contrary to Core Policy 67 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and paragraphs 165 and 173 of the National Planning Policy Framework

3. The site is located within an amber zone for greater crested newts, and the application fails to provide sufficient information to allow robust and comprehensive assessment of the ecological impacts of the proposal, including how development impacts protected species. The scheme further fails to demonstrate that the development minimises the impact on and how it will provide net gain for biodiversity. The scheme is contrary to Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and paragraphs 180 and 186 of the National Planning Policy Framework